

SEVEN
SERMONS
ON
PUBLIC OCCASIONS.

By the MOST REVEREND
Dr. THOMAS HERRING,
Late Lord Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.
With a PREFACE.

*Morum incredibili comitate maximis pariter ac
minimis, me, tametsi nihil omnino sum, pro sua
humanitate, singulari favore semper est prose-*
cutus.

ERASMUS in Epistolâ 35.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the EDITOR, 1763.

SEYMOUR

O-N

Public Omissions

By the Most Reverend

Dr. THOMAS



Lancelot Archibald

Now first corrected

Wm. & P. R. H. A. C. H.

The new and revised edition of the
Lancelot Archibald, 1844, is the
most complete and accurate
edition of the work yet published.

Printed by the Editor, 1844.

THE
P R E F A C E.

DR. *Thomas Herring*, late Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, was born at *Walsoken*, in *Norfolk*, in the Year 1693; his Father, Mr. *John Herring*, being then Rector of that Parish.

He was educated in the School of *Wisbech*, in the Isle of *Ely*, under the Care of Dr. *John Carter*, afterwards Fellow of *Eton College*.

In *June* 1710, he was admitted into *Jesus College*, in *Cambridge*: Dr. *Warren*, afterwards Rector of *Cavendish*, and Archdeacon of *Sussex*, was his Tutor.

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While he was a Member of this College, he took the Degree of Bachelor of Arts. But seeing no Prospect of obtaining a Fellowship there, he removed himself, in *July* 1714, to *Corpus Christi*, or *Benet* College, of which he was chosen Fellow in *April* 1716. The Year after he was created Master of Arts. He, and the learned Dr. *Denne*, now Archdeacon of *Rochester*, were joint Tutors there for upwards of Seven Years. Mr. *Herring* read the Clafical, and Dr. *Denne* the Philosophical Lectures.

He entered into Priest's Orders in the Year 1719, and was successively Minister of *Great Shelford*, *Stow cum Qui*, and *Trinity* in *Cambridge*. In the Year 1722, Dr. *Fleetwood*, then Bishop of *Ely*, made him his Chaplain. His Lordship had generally preached himself at
the

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the Chapel belonging to *Ely* House during the Winter Season; but in the Decline of Life when his Health was greatly impaired, Mr. *Herring* preached for him; and this excellent Prelate declared to his Friends, that he never heard a Sermon from Mr. *Herring*, but what he should have been proud to have been the Author of himself.

On the 1st of *October* in the same Year, viz. 1722, the Bishop presented him to the Rectory of *Retington* in *Essex*; and, on the 7th of *December*, to that of *Barley*, in *Hertfordshire*. In the Year 1724 he took the Degree of Bachelor in Divinity; and, about the same time, was presented by his Majesty to the Rectory of *Allhallows the Great*, in the City of *London*; which, however, he gave up before Institution.

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In the Year 1726 the Honourable Society of *Lincolns Inn*, on the Death of Dr. *Lupton*, chose him their Preacher. About the same time he was appointed Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty; and, in the Year 1728, took the Degree of Doctor in Divinity at *Cambridge*.

His Sermons at *Lincolns Inn* Chapel were received with the highest Approbation by that learned and judicious Society. They abounded with manly Sense, were animated by the most benevolent Principles, and adorned by his happy Elocution and unaffected Delivery. He seldom entered into the Disputes canvassed among Christians, having observed that these more frequently exasperate than convince. But he explained and enforced with the utmost Clearness and Warmth, the fundamental Duties of the Christian

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tian Life, which are so affectionately recommended in the Gospel. He was of Opinion, with a very ingenious Writer, that “ true Religion
“ is true Reason, which smiles at
“ pointed Wit, mocks the Scoffer’s
“ Tongue, and is alike invulnerable by Ridicule or Rage.”

Once indeed a great Clamour was raised on account of his alluding to a popular Entertainment, then exhibited at the neighbouring Theatre, and presuming to condemn it, as of pernicious Consequence in regard to the Practice of Morality and Christian Virtue. He was not singular in this Opinion ; and Experience afterwards confirmed the Truth of his Observations, since several Thieves and Street-robbers confessed in *Newgate*, that they raised their Courage at the Playhouse, by the Songs

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of their Hero *Macbeath*, before they sallied forth on their desperate nocturnal Exploits.

As it may be presumed that Prejudice is hushed by Length of Time, and the still Voice of Reason will probably now be heard, we will lay before the Reader Two Letters, in Justification of the Doctrine maintained in that Sermon, which were then printed, on different Days, in one of the weekly Papers.

— *Non si quid turbida Roma
Elevet, accedas.*

PERSIUS.

“ *S I R,*

March 30, 1728.

“ **I**T has, I think, been generally
“ agreed among Moralists, that
“ all public Sports and Entertain-
“ ments should be so regulated, as
“ to have a Tendency to the En-
“ couragement of Virtue, and the
“ discour-

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“ discountenancing of Vice and Im-
 “ morality. The Practice established
 “ by the wisest Legislators, who were
 “ sensible how great an Influence
 “ Plays and other Diversions have
 “ on the Minds of the Populace,
 “ has been conformable to this salu-
 “ tary Maxim. How shocking then
 “ would it have appeared to the
 “ venerable Sages of Antiquity, to
 “ have seen an Author bring upon
 “ the Stage, as a proper Subject for
 “ Laughter and Merriment, a Gang
 “ of Highwaymen and Pickpockets
 “ triumphing in their successful Vil-
 “ lainies, and braving the ignomi-
 “ nious Death they so justly deserve,
 “ with the undaunted Resolution of
 “ a *Stoic* Philosopher? The Courage
 “ expressed in the following Lines
 “ would have become a *Seneca* or a
 “ *Raleigh*, but seems not so suitable
 “ to the Character of a Criminal.

" The Charge is prepar'd; the Lawyers are met;

" The Judges all rang'd (a terrible Show!)

" I go undismay'd—for Death is a Debt,

" A Debt on Demand—so, take what I owe.

" The chief End of Punishment
" is to prevent the Commission of
" the like Offences for the future;
" and therefore all good Subjects
" should endeavour, as far as they
" are able, to heighten the Terror
" of the Penalties annexed by the
" Laws to flagrant Crimes: But to
" place (on the contrary) these Pe-
" nalties in a ludicrous Light, and
" to represent them as easy to be
" borne, and contemptible, is, in
" effect, blunting the Edge of the
" Civil Sword, and opening the
" Flood-Gates (if I may so speak)
" to the most outrageous Enormi-
" ties. The Mischief will be still
" farther promoted, if the Lives of
" such abandoned Wretches as Rob-
" bers

P R E F A C E. ix

“ bers and Street-walkers, are de-
 “ scribed as agreeable, and full of
 “ Mirth and Pleasure. How far a
 “ late celebrated Entertainment may
 “ have contributed towards those
 “ daring Attacks, which are daily
 “ committed on the Property of
 “ the Subject in the Streets of our
 “ Capital (in Defiance of all Law,
 “ and, I believe, beyond the Exam-
 “ ple of former Ages), I will not
 “ pretend to say; but, I am sure,
 “ nothing can be more proper to
 “ foment these Violences than such
 “ Lines as these;

“ *See the Ball I hold!*

“ *Let the Chymists toil like Asses,*

“ *Our Fire their Fire surpasses,*

“ *And turns all our Lead to Gold.*

“ The Agreeableness of the En-
 “ tertainment, and its being adapted
 “ to the Taste of the Vulgar, and

“ set to easy Tunes (which almost
 “ every-body can remember), makes
 “ the Contagion spread wider, and
 “ the Consequence the more to be
 “ dreaded. What *Cicero* says of the
 “ Poets in general, may (with a lit-
 “ tle Alteration) be more justly ap-
 “ plied to the Songs in Vogue: *Ita*
 “ *sunt dulces, ut non tantum avidâ*
 “ *bibantur aure, sed etiam ediscan-*
 “ *tur. Sic ad malam disciplinam,*
 “ *vitamque dissolutam, et effrena-*
 “ *tam, cum accesserunt hujusmodi*
 “ *Poetæ, nervos omnis virtutis eli-*
 “ *dunt*—I shall conclude with a
 “ very just Observation of Mr. *Ad-*
 “ *dison*, in the 249th *Spectator*:
 “ *If the Talent of Ridicule were em-*
 “ *ployed to laugh Men out of Vice*
 “ *and Folly, it might be of some Use*
 “ *to the World; but, instead of this,*
 “ *we find it is generally made use of*
 “ *to laugh Men out of Virtue and*
 “ *good Sense, by attacking every thing*
 “ *that*

P R E F A C E. xi

*“ that is solemn and serious, decent
“ and praise-worthy, in human Life.*

*“ P. S. Since the Writing of the
“ foregoing Letter, a Sermon has
“ been preached in the Chapel of
“ one of our Inns of Court on
“ the same Subject. The judi-
“ cious Critic was there displayed,
“ as well as the Christian Ora-
“ tor. However this Discourse
“ may be ridiculed by the flut-
“ tering *Beaux* and *Belles* of
“ the Town, I will be bold to
“ say, that, as low as our Morals
“ are sunk, the clear Reasoning,
“ good Sense, and manly Rheto-
“ ric in it, will command the
“ Approbation of all Persons of
“ Virtue and Sobriety, who have
“ so much Thought and Consi-
“ deration as to attend to the
“ Consequences of Things----It
“ has been objected, that the Sub-
“ ject*

xii P R E F A C E.

“ ject was beneath the Preacher’s
“ Notice : To which it may be
“ replied, in the Words of *Ho-*
“ *race* ;

“ -----*Hæ nugæ seria ducent*
“ *In mala* ;

“ And nothing, which has a
“ direct Tendency to promote
“ a general Depravity of Man-
“ ners, can be thought unworthy
“ the Rebuke of a Christian Di-
“ vine.”

“ S I R,

April 20, 1728.

“ I T has been remarked, by an
“ Author of distinguished Merit,
“ *That great Part of the Writings*
“ *which once prevailed among us, un-*
“ *der the Notion of Humour, are*
“ *such as would tempt us to think*
“ *there had been an Association among*
“ *the*

P R E F A C E. xiii

“ *the Wits of those Times, to rally*
 “ *Legitimacy out of our Island. Spec-*
 “ *tator, N^o. 525.---*It is matter of
 “ just Grief to Persons of sober Re-
 “ flection, to find the same petu-
 “ lant Temper revived among us at
 “ present. But some of the Writers
 “ now in vogue trace out new Paths
 “ to Fame, unknown to their pious
 “ Predecessors, who flourished in the
 “ Reign of King *Charles* the Second.
 “ Marriage indeed was then ridi-
 “ culed, and the Clergy placed in a
 “ contemptible Light: But to chuse a
 “ Highwayman for the Heroe of the
 “ *Drama*, and to raise, not Indig-
 “ nation or Compassion, but Mirth
 “ and Laughter, by representing him
 “ on the Stage intoxicating himself
 “ with strong Liquors, in order to
 “ *die hard*, as the Felons phrase it;
 “ this is a new Improvement, re-
 “ served to crown with Bays a living
 “ Bard! It were to be wished, for
 “ the

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“ the Honour of the *British* Taste,
“ that we could conceal from our
“ polite Neighbours Abroad, the
“ Success this Piece has met with.
“ But (since that is impossible) let it
“ be known at the same time, there
“ are some among us, who (though
“ they allow its Claim to low Hu-
“ mour) have so much Courage and
“ Honesty as to protest against the
“ Plan or Ground-work of it as ab-
“ surd, and of dangerous Conse-
“ quence.

“ If it be granted that *dramatic*
“ Performances have any Influence
“ at all on the Minds of the People
“ (which, I believe, was never yet
“ doubted), it will follow, that an
“ Entertainment of this kind, where
“ almost all the Characters are vici-
“ ous and criminal, and yet, by the
“ Poignancy of Raillery and Satire,
“ joined to the Charms of Music,
“ pleasing

P R E F A C E. xv

“ pleasing and delightful, and where
 “ the vilest Principles are propagated
 “ in the most alluring Manner; I
 “ say, such an Entertainment must
 “ highly tend to corrupt and de-
 “ bauch the Morals of the Nation---
 “ I beg Leave to conclude with a
 “ memorable Passage from the be-
 “ fore-cited Author, which, I wish,
 “ all who are concerned would seri-
 “ ously lay to Heart; *An Author*
 “ *may write as if he thought there*
 “ *was not one Man of Honour, or*
 “ *Woman of Chastity, in the House,*
 “ *and come off with Applause: For*
 “ *an Insult upon all the Ten Com-*
 “ *mandments, with the little Critics,*
 “ *is not so bad as the Breach of an*
 “ *Unity of Time or Place. Half-*
 “ *Wits do not apprehend the Mi-*
 “ *series that must necessarily flow*
 “ *from Degeneracy of Manners; nor*
 “ *do they know that Order is the*
 “ *Support of Society.-----Sallies of*
 “ *Imagi-*

xvi P R E F A C E.

“ *Imagination are to be overlooked,*
“ *when they are committed out of*
“ *Warmth, in the Recommendation*
“ *of what is praise-worthy; but a*
“ *deliberate advancing of Vice, with*
“ *all the Wit in the World, is as ill*
“ *an Action as any that comes before*
“ *the Magistrate, and ought to be*
“ *received as such by the People.*
“ *Spectator, N^o. 270.*”

In 1731 Sir *William Clayton*, Baronet, presented him to the Rectory of *Blechingly*, in *Surry*; and, towards the Close of the same Year, his Majesty promoted him to the Deanery of *Rochester*, where he was installed *February 5, 1731-2.*

In 1737 he was advanced to the Bishopric of *Bangor*; and, in 1743, on the Death of Dr. *Blackburn*, was translated to the Archiepiscopal See of *York*.

In

P R E F A C E. xvii

In the Year 1745 the Rebellion broke out in *Scotland*. The Progress the Rebels then made was so artfully concealed by their Friends in *England*, that it was scarce known or believed that the *Highlanders* were up in Arms, before certain Advice came that they had defeated the King's Troops at *Preston-pans*. The Panic with which all were then seized is well remembered.

The Archbishop was the first who gave the Alarm, and awakened the Nation from its Lethargy. This will always be remembered to his Honour by every sincere Protestant. His Example was followed by the Bishops and the Clergy in general with great Success. An Association was entered into at *York*, and a Subscription proposed, for Money to raise Troops for the Defence of that County.

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The

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The neighbouring Nobility, Gentry, and Clergy, met for that Purpose at the Castle of *York*, on *September 24, 1745*, where his Grace addressed them in the following Speech.

“ *My Lords; Gentlemen;*

“ *My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy;*

“ **I** Am desired by the Lord Lieutenants of the several Ridings,
“ to open to you the Reason of our
“ present assembling: And as the
“ Advertisement, which has called
“ us together, is in every-body’s
“ Hands, and the Fact now speaks
“ itself too plainly, a few Words
“ will be sufficient on the Occasion.

“ It was some time before it was
“ believed (I would to God it had
“ gained Credit sooner) but now
“ every Child knows it, that the
“ Pretender’s Son is in *Scotland*;
“ has

P R E F A C E. xix

“ has set up his Standard there; has
 “ gathered and disciplined an Army
 “ of great Force; receives daily In-
 “ crease of Numbers; is in the Pos-
 “ session of the Capital City there;
 “ has defeated a small Part of the
 “ King’s Forces; and is advancing
 “ with hasty Steps towards *England*.

“ What will be the Issue of this
 “ rapid Progress, must be left to the
 “ Providence of Almighty God.
 “ However, what is incumbent upon
 “ us to do, is to make the best Pro-
 “ vision we can against it; and every
 “ Gentleman, I dare say every Man
 “ in *England*, will think it his Wis-
 “ dom and his Interest to guard
 “ against the mischievous Attempts
 “ of these wild and desperate Ruf-
 “ fians.

“ But the great Mischief to be
 “ feared, which ought to alarm us

“ exceedingly, and put us immedi-
“ ately on our Defence, is the cer-
“ tain Evidence, which every Day
“ opens more and more, that these
“ Commotions in the North are but
“ Part of a great Plan concerted for
“ our Ruin.---They have begun un-
“ der the Countenance, and will be
“ supported by the Forces of *France*
“ and *Spain*, our old and inveterate
“ (and late Experience calls upon
“ me to add, our savage and blood-
“ thirsty) Enemies.-----A Circum-
“ stance that should fire the Indig-
“ nation of every honest *English-*
“ *man*. If these Designs should
“ succeed, and Popery and arbitrary
“ Power come in upon us, under
“ the Influence and Direction of
“ these two tyrannical and cor-
“ rupted Courts, I leave you to re-
“ flect what would become of every
“ thing that is valuable to us.

“ We

P R E F A C E. xxi

“ We are now blessed under the
 “ mild Administration of a just and
 “ Protestant King, who is of so strict
 “ an Adherence to the Laws of our
 “ Country, that not an Instance can
 “ be pointed out, during his whole
 “ Reign, wherein he hath made the
 “ least Attempt upon the Liberty, or
 “ Property, or Religion of a single
 “ Person. But if the Ambition and
 “ Pride of *France* and *Spain* is to
 “ dictate to us, we must submit to
 “ a Man to govern us under their
 “ hated and accursed Influence, who
 “ brings his Religion from *Rome*,
 “ and the Rules and Maxims of his
 “ Government from *Paris* and *Ma-*
 “ *drid*.

“ For God’s sake, Gentlemen, let
 “ us consider this Matter as becomes
 “ us, and let no Time be lost to
 “ guard against this prodigious Ruin.
 “ To Your immortal Honour be it
 b 3 “ spoken,

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“ spoken, You have considered it ;
“ and are now met together to call
“ in the unanimous Consent and
“ Assistance of this great County.
“ This County, as it exceeds every
“ other for its Extent and Riches,
“ so it very naturally takes the Lead
“ of the inferior ones. And it will
“ be extremely to our Credit; give
“ Courage to the Friends of the best
“ Constitution in the World; damp
“ the Spirits of its Enemies at Home
“ (if any such can be conceived in
“ *Britain* at this dangerous Crisis);
“ and be an Instruction to those
“ Abroad; that there is still Spirit
“ and Honesty enough among us to
“ stand up in Defence of our com-
“ mon Country. This will be the
“ Use of an unanimous and hearty
“ Declaration of Fidelity to our
“ Country, and Loyalty to our King.
“ But the Times, Gentlemen, call
“ for something more than this!
“ Some-

P R E F A C E xxiii

“ Something must be done as well
“ as said—And the Fund for our
“ Defence, already begun, and now
“ to be proposed to this great As-
“ sembly, will, it is hoped, from
“ Reasons of public Example, and
“ public Safety, meet with the hearty
“ Concurrence of every Individual
“ that composes it. And at the same
“ time that your Hearts go along
“ with the Association, your Hands
“ will be open to support the neces-
“ sary Measures of Self-defence.

“ As to you, my Reverend Bre-
“ thren, I have not long had the
“ Honour to preside among you;
“ but from the Experience I have
“ had, and what I have always heard
“ of your honest Love to your Coun-
“ try (if you permit me to say so)
“ I will be your Security to the
“ Public, that you will decline no

xxiv P R E F A C E.

“ Pains to instruct and animate your
“ People, nor Expence, according
“ to your Circumstance, to stand
“ up against Popery and arbitrary
“ Power, under a *French* or *Spanish*
“ Government.---We scorn the Po-
“ licies of the Court of *Rome*; have
“ no Interests separate from the Peo-
“ ple; but, on every Occasion, where
“ our Country is concerned, look
“ upon ourselves as incorporated
“ with the warmest Defenders of it;
“ or, if we do desire to be distin-
“ guished, it will be by our Ardour
“ and Zeal to preserve our happy
“ Constitution.

“ Let us unite then, Gentlemen,
“ as One Man, to stop this danger-
“ ous Mischief, from which Union
“ no Man can surely withdraw or
“ with-hold his Assistance, who is
“ not lifted into the wicked Service
“ of

P R E F A C E. xxv

“ of a *French* or *Spanish* Invasion;
“ or wholly unconcerned for the
“ Fate of his bleeding Country.

“ May the great God of Battles
“ stretch out his all-powerful Hand
“ to defend us; inspire an Union
“ of Hearts and Hands among all
“ Ranks of People; a clear Wis-
“ dom into the Councils of his Ma-
“ jesty; and a steady Courage and
“ Resolution into the Hearts of his
“ Generals!”

This Speech had the desired Effect; and 40,000 *l.* was immediately subscribed for the before-mentioned Purpose.

On the Duke of *Cumberland's* Return to *York*, after the Victory gained over the Rebels at *Culloden*, and the intire Suppression of the Rebellion; the Archbishop, at the
Head

xxvi P R E F A C E.

Head of the Dean, Chapter, and Clergy, addressed his Royal Highness, on the 23d of *July*, 1746, in the following Manner.

“ Permit me, Sir, in the Name
“ of my Brethren, the Clergy of
“ this Diocese and Province (the
“ King’s ever faithful Subjects) to
“ testify to your Royal Highness,
“ their exceeding Joy at your
“ happy and victorious Return
“ from the *North*. I want Words
“ to express the Fulness of our
“ grateful Hearts on this Occa-
“ sion ; and therefore I shall not
“ attempt it.

“ Your Conduct, Royal Sir, has
“ been glorious ; and though the
“ Things you have done for the
“ Nation are singularly great, your
“ Manner of performing them is
“ still more to be admired. You
“ have

P R E F A C E. xxvii

“ have restored the public Tran-
“ quillity at a very critical Season,
“ and done it, Sir, as became your
“ high Character, in every ami-
“ able Light.

“ Courage is almost natural to a
“ young Prince, and is inherent in
“ your Royal Blood; Activity and
“ Industry are often constitutional;
“ but to plan a great Design ma-
“ turely, at a perilous Conjun-
“ ture; to execute it with all the
“ Coolness, and Caution, and
“ Providence of an old General,
“ actuated with the Fire and Ex-
“ ertion of a young one; to use
“ Moderation and Modesty in Suc-
“ cess; and in the Midst of Vic-
“ tory (where obdurate Perfidy did
“ not call for exemplary Punish-
“ ment) to treat unnatural and
“ unprovoked Rebels to the best
“ Government in the World, as
“ * “ deluded

xxviii P R E F A C E.

“ deluded Subjects; these things,
“ Sir, which Truth obliges me to
“ say (though unpolitely in the
“ Hearing of your Royal High-
“ nefs) shew the Greatness of your
“ Understanding, and the Good-
“ ness of your Heart, which make
“ every Subject of *Great Britain*
“ not only admire, and love, and
“ serve you, as the Son of their
“ Royal Master, and the Brother
“ of their beloved Prince, but
“ trust and depend upon You as
“ the happy Instrument of Hea-
“ ven, to save, and protect, and
“ raise the Honour of the Na-
“ tion.

“ Go on, as you have begun,
“ Great Sir, in the Paths of Vir-
“ tue and true Glory : And may
“ the good Providence of God
“ always go along with You,
“ direct all your Counsels, cover
“ your

P R E F A C E. xxix

“ your Head in the Day of Battle;
“ and, as you fight the Cause of
“ *Truth* and *Liberty*, give unin-
“ terrupted Success to all your
“ Undertakings !”

To this Speech his Royal High-
ness returned a most gracious An-
swer.

Archbishop *Potter* dying in the
Year 1747, Dr. *Herring* was
translated to the See of *Canterbury*.
His Accession to the highest Dig-
nity in the Church gave great Joy
to the Friends of the present hap-
py Establishment, and to all Lovers
of Christian Liberty. In this high
Station he treated his Friends with
the same Ease and Courtesy as be-
fore : He knew how to conde-
scend, without detracting from the
Reverence due to his Character.

xxx P R E F A C E.

The learned Dr. *Birch*, in his Dedication of the Life of A. B. *Tillotson* to our excellent Prelate, observes,
“ That he resembled him by his
“ known Reluctance to accepting
“ the *First* Station in the Church,
“ with this peculiar Circumstance,
“ of having before shewn the highest
“ Qualifications for it, by a Conduct
“ in the *Second*, from which the
“ public Safety received its earliest
“ Support at its most dangerous
“ Crisis.”

The Sentiments which B. *Burnet* * tells us the same Archbishop entertained of the chief End of the Christian Religion are no less applicable to those of our Prelate.

* See the Bishop of *Salisbury*'s Sermon preached at *St. Lawrence Jewry*, November 30, 1694, at the Funeral of Archbishop *Tillotson*.

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“ He judged that the great De-
“ sign of Christianity was to reform
“ Mens Natures, to govern their
“ Actions, to restrain their Appe-
“ tites and Passions, to sweeten
“ their Tempers, compose their
“ Affections, and raise their Minds
“ above the Interests and Follies of
“ this present World, to the Hope
“ and Pursuit of endless Felicity :
“ And he considered the whole
“ Christian Doctrine as a System
“ of Principles all tending to this
“ End. He looked on our con-
“ tending about lesser Matters, or
“ about Subtleties relating to those
“ that are greater, as one of the
“ chief Practices of the Powers of
“ Darkness to defeat the true Ends
“ *for which the Son of God came*
“ *into the World.*”

But let us hear Dr. *Herring's*
own Words, when he was Bishop
of *Bangor*. “ It

xxxii P R E F A C E.

“ It was not the Design of Chrif-
“ tianity certainly to make a *new*
“ Creation in a literal Senfe, but to
“ reftore Men to that Rectitude of
“ Mind and Manners, which was
“ the Purpose of the *old* one; for
“ we are naturally formed for the
“ Practice of Virtue, and, without
“ it, cannot poffibly be happy :
“ The Gospel, therefore, does not
“ *alter* the Nature of Virtue, but
“ *eftablifh* its Practice, by affuring
“ us, that God is pleafed with it,
“ and will, by the fecret Work-
“ ings of his Spirit, affift good
“ Men in the Performance of it ;
“ and that he has made fuch Pro-
“ vifion for their Reward in ano-
“ ther World, that it is become
“ not only our reasonable Duty,
“ but, under all Circumftances,
“ even of the greateft Diffrefs,
“ moft eligible and advantageous.

“ It

P R E F A C E. xxxiii

“ It was before a matter of
“ much Difficulty to understand
“ what was properly Religion : It
“ had been so obscured and blended
“ with the corrupt Additions of
“ Men. Our Saviour purified it,
“ taught Men what it was, and
“ how to value it ; and, to guard
“ against the bad Practices of de-
“ signing or superstitious Men,
“ added but Two positive Duties,
“ and those of very plain and easy
“ Significancy ; and, in their De-
“ sign and Operation, perfective of
“ the Christian Life.

“ Add to all this that other great
“ Doctrine of the Gospel, on which
“ all our Expectations of future
“ Happiness seem to turn, and that
“ is the Mercy and Placability of
“ the Deity, who, *though of purer*
“ *Eyes than to behold Iniquity*, has
“ yet assured us, that if we endea-
“ your,

xxxiv P R E F A C E.

“ vour, *faithfully* and *sincerely*, to
“ do his Will, and, from human
“ Frailty, fail in the Performance,
“ he will consider, and compassion-
“ ate, and forgive our Miscarriages,
“ through the Mediation and Re-
“ demption of CHRIST JESUS *.”

The Character which St. *Chryso-
stom* has drawn of a good Bishop,
in his celebrated Tract *Of the
Priesthood*, Book III. may be re-
garded as the Picture of our Pre-
late; “ He must be venerable, but
“ without Pride; awful, and yet
“ courteous: He must be a Man
“ of Integrity, and yet obsequi-
“ ous; humble, but not servile;
“ severe, and yet mild.”

* The Bishop of *Bangor*’s Sermon before the
Incorporated Society for propagating the Gos-
pel in foreign Parts, *February* 17, 1737-8.

P R E F A C E. xxxv

It is to be regretted that his Grace's Modesty and Diffidence were so extreme, as to restrain him from publishing any more than *Seven* of his Sermons. These were preached on public Occasions, and have been long out of Print. They are here collected, that they may not be lost to Posterity.

It has been said, that the Archbishop thought his Sermons unworthy the Eye of the Public; and since they were condemned by his own Judgment, they ought not to be preserved. But may it not be argued with Parity of Reason, that *Virgil*, by his Will, ordered the *Æneid* to be burnt; and therefore it can be of no Value? Notwithstanding this, *Augustus* appealed from his Will to the Verdict of

* *

the

xxxvi P R E F A C E.

the Public and of Posterity, which has done Justice to its Merit.

Having been solicited by one of his Friends, to allow some more of his Sermons to be printed, he referred him to a * Passage in *Burton's* Preface to his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, as expressive of his own Sentiments; at the same time observing, that the Wits of Queen *Anne's* Reign had made great Use of that forgotten Book.

* “ There are already so many Books of
“ Divinity, so many Commentaries, Tracts,
“ Pamphlets, Expositions, Sermons, that
“ whole Teams of Oxen cannot draw them.
“ And, had I been as forward as some
“ others, I might have haply printed many
“ Sermons. But I have been ever as desirous
“ to suppress my Labours in this kind, as
“ others have been to publish theirs.” Pre-
face to the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 15.

He

P R E F A C E. xxxvii

He frankly owned that he never had any Relish for *Metaphysical* Studies. He thought the Arguments *a posteriori*, as they are called, drawn from the Beauty, Harmony, and Variety of the visible Creation, and the mutual Coincidence (if I may so speak) and Subserviency of one thing to support another, the most convincing, and best suited to the Capacities of all Men, to prove the *natural* and *moral* Attributes of the Deity, and our Duty to him as rational and accountable Creatures, deducible from them.

His Grace recommended to his Friends *Abernethy's* * Discourses on the

* The whole Title of this Book runs thus:
 " Discourses concerning the Perfections of
 " God; in which his Holiness, Goodness,
 " * * 2 " and

xxxviii P R E F A C E.

the *Perfections* of God, as one of the most rational and best written Books this Age can boast of.

He thought it the more proper to be carefully perused and studied, especially by young Clergymen, since such a daring Attack has been made on the *moral Attributes* by a late assuming Writer.

He admired the *Latin Poem De Animi Immortalitate*, written by *Isaac Hawkins Browne*, Esq; for its Simplicity, Elegance, and clear Reasoning, and sent the Author a polite Letter on its Publication.

“ and other moral Attributes, are explained
“ and proved; the Foundations of true Religion, consisting in the Fear and Love of
“ God, in Obedience to and Trust in him,
“ are illustrated and established, by *John Abernethy*, M. A.” There have been
Three Editions of it in the Compass of a few
Years.

No

P R E F A C E. *xxxv

No Master was ever more carefully obeyed, or more cordially lamented, than he was by all his Servants; and indeed he deserved it. He showed himself a sort of Father to them, by making in his Will a very handsome Provision for all those, who had lived any time with him.

In the Year 1753 he was seized with a violent Fever at *Lambeth* House, which brought him to the brink of the Grave. And though he did in some measure recover, yet from that time he might be rather said to *languish* than to *live*. He retired to *Croydon*, declined all public Business, as far as he could, and saw little other Company than his Relations and particular Friends.

After languishing, as we have observed, for about four Years, he
calmly

* xxxvi P R E F A C E.

calmly resigned his Soul into the Hands of his Creator on *March* 13, 1757, and was buried in a private manner in the Vault of *Croydon Church*, according to the exprefs Direction of his Will.

*Ibi satur quietè, gaudii plenus,
Quæſita quondam diſcis; et vides, quanta
Involvat homines inſcientiæ nubes:
Quam nil ſit illud, quod vocamus hic SCIRE;
Quo nos ſuperbi tollimus caput cælo;
Calcamus alios, invicemque calcamur.
Hinc tanta bella ſerviunt magiſtrorum;
Hinc odia plebis: Interim fugit longè,
Nec ſe videndam dimicantibus præbet
Amica ſanctæ ſancta veritas pacis.*

GROTIUS.

There calmly bleſt, you clearly know
Thoſe Truths you long had ſought below;
What Clouds of Error blind us all;
A Cypher, what we Knowledge call!
Yet puff'd with this, we others ſpurn;
Ourſelves inſulted in our turn.
Hence ſuch fierce Wars our Doctors wage;
Hence party Feuds and pious Rage!
While holy *Truth*, of *Peace* the Friend,
Eſcapes unſeen, as we contend.

Though

P R E F A C E. *xxxvii

Though he absolutely forbid a Monument, it is hoped that this small one to his Memory, of his own raising, will neither be unacceptable to his Friends or the Public.

He left to the incorporated Society for the Relief of the Widows and Sons of poor Clergymen, the Sum of *One thousand* Pounds. And to the Master and Fellows of *Corpus Christi* College, in *Cambridge*, for the Time being, the Sum of *One thousand* Pounds, old South-Sea Annuity Stock, intending it (to use his own Words) as his Acknowledgment for Favours conferred on his Relations, and as his Contribution towards rebuilding the said College. But if, after the Lapse of a competent Number of Years, no Prospect arises of building the said College, then
the

*xxxviii P R E F A C E.

the Dividends and Savings on the said Stock are to be disposed of at the Discretion of the Master, in the necessary Repairs of the old House, or in Acts of Charity, such as helping poor Scholars, or honest decayed Servants. The Master is to give an Account, not subject to Controul, at every annual Audit, of the Disposal of the Dividends in the preceding Year, from the Time of their Commencement; so that, except in the Case of rebuilding the said College, the abovesaid Stock, or an Estate purchased therewith, at the Discretion of the said Master and Fellows, be reserved for ever.

He improved the Gardens at *Bishopthorpe*, and gave a new Clock to the Turret. He restored the House at *Croydon* in a manner from Ruins,
and

P R E F A C E. xxxix

and raised and beautified the Gardens.

If I am rightly informed, he laid out above *Six thousand* Pounds in repairing and adorning the Houses and Gardens at *Lambeth* and *Croydon*.

The Author of the Life of Dr. *Grindal*, who had been successively Bishop of *London*, Archbishop of *York*, and Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, concludes his Account of him in this manner;

“ * Thus did this worthy Archbishop die poor in Estate, but rich in good Works. He freely be-

* See the *Biographia Britannica*, vol. iv. p. 2440, in the Notes.

xl P R E F A C E.

“ stowed a Share of his Revenues
“ in repairing and keeping up the
“ Edifices belonging to the Sees
“ over which he presided. Yet could
“ not this save his Executors from
“ being sued for Dilapidations, tho’
“ they made it appear to the Lord
“ Treasurer, and to Secretary *Wat-*
“ *singham* (the Overseers of his Will),
“ to whom they appealed, that he
“ left his Houses in much better
“ Condition than he had found
“ them at the Death of his Prede-
“ cessor, Archbishop *Parker*.”

He left a Legacy to the Earl of
Hardwicke in these Words: “ I beg
“ the Favour of the Earl of *Hard-*
“ *wicke*, my ever honoured Friend,
“ to accept my Topaz Seal, engraved
“ by *Yeo*; and the Head of Bishop
“ *Fleetwood* of *Ely*, painted by *Rich-*
“ *ardson*.”

P R E F A C E. xli

It will ever be remembered, to his Lordship's Honour, that the Dignities conferred on this amiable Divine, were owing to his unsolicited Recommendation,

It was thought that an alphabetical Table of the principal Matters would tend to show how sentimental the following Discourses are, which has been accordingly attempted at the end.

P. S. The Editor is obliged to the Gentleman who communicated the following Elegy, which, he makes no doubt, will be well received by the Public.

AURE-

AURELIUS:

AN

ELEGY,

Sacred to the MEMORY of

THOMAS HERRING, D.D.

Late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

*Quicquid ex illo amavimus, quicquid mirati sumus,
manet mansurumque est in animis hominum, in æter-
nitate temporum, famâ rerum.*

TACIT. *Kit. Agric.*

FAST by the Fountains of the silver * Cray,
Encircled deep with weeping Willows
round,
O ! let me sorrowing pass the pensive Day,
And wake my Reed to many a plaintive
Sound.

* A River in Kent.

II. For

II,

For good *Aurelius* (now alas! no more,) woli
 Sighs follow Sighs, and Tears to Tears suc-
 ceed; wish on
 Him shall the Muse in tenderest Notes deplore,
 For oft he tun'd to Melody my Reed.

III.

How was I late by his Indulgence blest;
 Chear'd with his Smiles, and by his Precepts
 taught! 13 0 T
 My Fancy deem'd him some angelic Guest,
 Some heaven-sent Guide, with blissful Ti-
 dings fraught.

IV.

Mild was his Aspect, full of Truth and Grace,
 Temper'd with Dignity and lively Sense;
 Sweetness and Candour beam'd upon his Face,
 Emblems of Love and large Benevolence.

V.

Yet never useless slept those Virtues fair,
 Nor languish'd, unexerted, in the Mind;
 Secret as Thought, yet unconfin'd as Air,
 He dealt his Bounties out to all Mankind.

VI, How

VI.

How will the Poor, alas! now truly poor,
 Bewail their generous Benefactor dead?
 Who daily, from his hospitable Door,
 The Naked cloth'd, and gave the Hungry
 Bread :

VII.

To Sick and Orphans duly sent Relief,
 Was Feet and Eyes to Cripples and the Blind,
 Sooth'd all the suffering Family of Grief,
 And pour'd sweet Balsam on the wounded
 Mind,

VIII.

How will the Nation their lost Guardian mourn?
 Lo! pale-ey'd SCIENCE fix'd in Grief appears;
 The drooping Arts, reclining on his Urn,
 Lament, and every Muse dissolves in Tears,

IX.

Genius of *Britain!* search the Kingdom round,
 Ere yet the strict Enquiry be too late;
 What bold, unblemish'd Patriot can be found,
 To rouse the Virtues of a languid State?

X. With

X.

With Freedom's Voice to wake the slumbering
Age,
To cheer fair Merit, Prowess to advance,
Dauntless to rise, and scourge with generous
Rage
The high-plum'd Pride and Perfidy of *France*.

XI.

Alas! no longer burns the glorious Flame;
The patriot Passion animates no more;
But, like the whirling Eddy, some low Aim
Absorbs alike the Great, the Rich, the Poor.

XII.

Not so, when wise *Aurelius* o'er the North
Shed the mild Influence of his pastoral Care;
The Madness of Rebellion issuing forth,
He stemm'd the Torrent of the rising War.

XIII.

Behold him! with his Country's Weal in-
spir'd,
Before the martial Sons of *Ebor* stand,
Fair in the Robe of Eloquence attir'd,
In act to speak, he waves the graceful Hand.

XIV. Silent

XIV.

Silent as Evening, lo! the listening Throng,
While from his Lips the glowing Periods fall,
Drink sweet Persuasion, streaming from his
Tongue,
And the firm Chain of Concord binds them
all.

XV.

As some large River, gentle, strong and deep,
Winds his smooth Volumes o'er the wide
Campaign,
Then forceful flows, and, with resistless Sweep,
Rolls, in his Strength collected, to the Main:

XVI.

Thus the good Prelate, in his Country's Cause,
Pour'd the full Tide of Eloquence along;
As erst *Tyrtæus* gain'd divine Applause,
Who fir'd the *Spartans* with heroic Song.

XVII.

But when religious Truths his Bosom warm'd,
Faith, Hope, Repentance, and eternal Love,
With such pathetic Energy he charm'd,
He rais'd our Souls to Paradise above.

XVIII. The

XVIII.

The Holy City's adamant Gate
On golden Hinge, he open'd to our View;
Unravell'd every Path, perplex'd and strait,
And gave to willing Minds the safe-conduct-
ing Clue.

XIX.

For God's MESSIAH was his chosen Guide;
And well the sacred Lore he understood,
And well the Precept, sent from Heaven, ap-
ply'd,
' For Evil meekly recompensing Good.'

XX.

Thus mild, thus humble, in the highest State,
The "one Thing needful" was his sole Re-
gard;
Belov'd, and blameless, he prolong'd his Date
By Acts of Goodness, which themselves re-
ward.

XXI.

To him the Bed of Sickness gave no Pain;
For, trusting only in th' Almighty King,
He look'd on Dissolution as his Gain;
No Terrors had the Grave, and Death no
Sting.

d

XXII. Ah!

[xlviii]

XXII.

Ah! Muse, forbear that last sad Scene to draw—
This Homage, due to Virtue, let me pay,
These Heart-sprung Tears, inspir'd by filial
Awe,
These Numbers warbled to the silver Cray.

May, 1757.

P. S. On a plain black Stone, in the Church of
Croydon, is the following short Inscription.

Here lieth the Body of
The Most Reverend Dr, THOMAS HERRING,
Archbishop of CANTERBURY,
who died March XIII.
A.D. M.DCC.LVII.
Aged LXIV.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT TO THE
P R E F A C E.

WHATEVER Opinion the good Archbishop might possibly entertain of these Discourses, after his Spirits were sunk by the Loss of Fourscore Ounces of Blood, in a very short Space of Time, and when he was *passing through the Valley of Death*; yet since the *Two* Sermons which he voluntarily preached at *York* and *Kensington*, in the Years 1745, and 1747, were afterwards sent by him to the Press; and, as far as appears, without any previous Solicitation, it is evident, that he *then* thought that these Sermons at least might be serviceable to the Public.

1 POSTSCRIPT.

The last of them is a just and spirited Invective against *Arbitrary Power*, and the pernicious Errors of *Popery*; and, in this light, may be considered as an invaluable Legacy to his Countrymen. I beg Leave to quote here a Passage or Two from it; “Despotic Government, founded in hereditary Right, where * *one Man’s Will* is every Man’s Misery, is not more *mischievous* than it is *absurd*. There is Reason, and Spirit, and Liberty, in Law; and it is not only essential to every Man’s Property, but without it, there can be no such Thing as Virtue or Religion in the World.

“No Nation (speaking in the
“Gross) can possibly be happy

* Hooker.

“and

POSTSCRIPT. li

“ and flourishing under *Popery*,
“ because the Influence of it is of
“ so baneful a Nature, that it does
“ not only sink the Spirits of Men,
“ damp the Vigour and Life of
“ Industry, stop every Avenue to
“ religious Knowledge from the
“ Scriptures, make Princes Ty-
“ rants, and their People Slaves,
“ but it, in a manner, counter-
“ termines the Wisdom and Good-
“ ness of Providence, and con-
“ verts (as it has done in fact,)
“ the most beautiful and fertile
“ Country into a desolate Wilder-
“ ness. And therefore when we sit
“ down to recollect ourselves, and
“ recover our ancient Character of
“ a sober, and good-natured, and
“ religious People, let it be our
“ principal Care to avoid the Con-
“ tagion of this bad, this absurd,
“ and, from its mischievous Spirit,
“ I must call it, this *Unchristian*
“ Reli-

lii POSTSCRIPT.

“ Religion. For *Popery*, as a
“ fine Writer expresses it, is really
“ an Usurpation upon Christianity,
“ and, like Usurpers, lives within
“ its Guards, Inquisitors, and Dra-
“ goons; it settles and supports it-
“ self by Gibbets, Axes, Halters,
“ Fire and Sword, and all the In-
“ struments of Death and cruel
“ Execution.” The whole Dis-
course is animated with the same
Spirit.

The other *Five* Sermons were
printed by the Command, or at
the Request, of some of the most
respectable Persons, or Bodies cor-
porate, viz.

The House of LORDS,

The Society for the Propagation
of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,

The

POSTSCRIPT. liii

The LORD-MAYOR and Court
of ALDERMEN,

The SOCIETY corresponding with
the INCORPORATED SOCIETY in
Dublin, for promoting *English*
Protestant working Schools in *Ire-*
land,

And the * PRESIDENT and
GOVERNORS of the *London* Infir-
mary.

* The late Duke of *Richmond* was, at that
Time, their PRESIDENT, whose benevolent
Heart made him always ready to promote
and encourage every laudable Work.

A SE-

A SECOND POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE these Sheets were sent to the Press, the Life of *Erasmus*, written by the learned Dr. *Jortin*, has appeared.

In a Note, Vol. i. p. 42, having just before quoted the excellent Character which *Erasmus* drew of Dr. *William Warham*, (Archbishop of *Canterbury*) after his Decease, he takes occasion from thence, to sketch the following just Picture of his own great Friend and Patron, Archbishop *Herring*.

“ It is with a melancholy kind
 “ of Pleasure that I transcribe
 “ these Passages, and shall, in
 “ other parts of this Work, in-
 “ sert

A SECOND POSTSCRIPT. lv

“sert other Testimonies to the Ho-
“nour of the Archbishop; whilst
“in the Character of this amiable
“Prelate, drawn by so masterly a
“Hand, I contemplate that of my
“late Patron (*Thomas Herring*,
“Archbishop of *Canterbury*), who,
“besides the good Qualities in
“which he resembled *Warham*,
“had Piety without Superstition,
“and Moderation without Mean-
“ness; an open and a liberal Way
“of thinking, and a constant At-
“tachment to the Cause of sober
“and rational Liberty, both civil
“and religious.

“ Thus he lived and died ; and
“ few great Men passed through
“ this malevolent World, better
“ beloved, and less censured, than
“ he.”

He afterwards speaks of his
Connections with the Arch-
bishop

lvi A SECOND POSTSCRIPT.

shop in the following modest
Manner.

“ He told me once, with an
“ obliging Condescension, which
“ I can never forget, that he would
“ be to me, what *Warham* was to
“ *Erasmus*; and what he pro-
“ mised, he performed; only less
“ fortunate in the Choice of his
“ humble Friend, who cannot be
“ to *him*, what *Erasmus* was to
“ *Warham*.

“ But if these Pages should live,
“ protected by the Subject which
“ they treat of, and the Materials
“ of which they are composed,
“ they may perhaps assist in doing
“ Justice to his Memory.

*His mihi dilectum nomen, Manesque verendos,
His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar amico
Munere. Non totus, raptus licet, optime Præsul,
Eriperis: redit os placidum, moresque benigni;
Et venit ante oculos, et pectore vivit Imago.*

Dr.

A SECOND POSTSCRIPT. lvii

Dr. *Jortin*, by this honorary Tribute to his Grace's Memory, when he could no longer serve him, has shewn himself worthy the Share he enjoyed in his Esteem. It has been generally received with the Applause it so justly deserves.

I cannot but congratulate this excellent Divine on his having found another powerful Patron in the worthy Bishop of *London*; to whose successful Solicitation, when Dean of *York*, the noble Minster there owes, in a great measure, its present Beauty.

It is hoped the Reader will pardon me a short Digression to congratulate another learned Friend, the Reverend Mr. *Ridley*, on the great Encouragement he has met with in his Subscription for the Life of Dr. *Nicholas Ridley*, Bishop of *London*,

lviii A SECOND POSTSCRIPT.

in the Reigns of King *Edward* the VIth, and Queen *Mary*. He and *Latimer* died Martyrs for the Protestant Cause, at the same Stake, with unshaken Constancy and Resolution, in the Year 1555. *Burnet* says, “ that *Ridley* was esteemed “ the ablest of all that advanced the “ Reformation, for Piety, Learning, and a solid Judgment.”

The Author of his Life is descended from a collateral Branch of this primitive Bishop's Family. His Grace of *Canterbury*, who is always ready to encourage every laudable Attempt, has been pleased to promote this Work with a becoming Zeal; and his Example, I am told, has been followed by the venerable Bench of Bishops.

But to return; The Editor is extremely obliged to the Gentleman

A SECOND POSTSCRIPT. lix
man, who communicated to him
the following faithful Character of
Archbishop *Herring*, drawn by the
masterly Hand of a Friend, whom
his Grace highly valued.

“ Archbishop *Herring*’s Person
“ was tall and comely; his Consti-
“ tution, from his tenderest Youth,
“ weak and delicate; his Address
“ easy, engaging and polite. He
“ was generous without Prodigali-
“ ty, magnificent without Profu-
“ sion, and humble without Mean-
“ ness. His distinguished Applica-
“ tion to the Business of his Func-
“ tion, his Learning, his warm At-
“ tachment to the Constitution in
“ Church and State, and his pa-
“ thetic Eloquence in the Pulpit,
“ having recommended him to the
“ early Notice of the Great; he
“ ever afterwards maintained him-
“ self in the Possession of their
“ Favour,

IX A SECOND POSTSCRIPT.

“ Favour, Esteem and Affection,
“ by his ingenuous Conversation,
“ and by his singular Candour,
“ Temper, and Moderation.

“ Every new Preferment, by
“ rendering both his public and
“ private Virtues more known
“ and conspicuous, convinced the
“ World, that he was still worthy
“ of something higher ; till, un-
“ solliciting and unexpected, he
“ was called by his Sovereign, with
“ the universal Approbation, to
“ the most exalted Dignity of the
“ Church. So kind and obliging
“ was his Grace’s Manner in con-
“ ferring Favours, that it added a
“ double Pleasure to the Receiver.
“ He felt the Anxiety of the doubt-
“ ful Petitioner, and removed his
“ Suspense as soon as possible ;
“ and, when forced to deny a Re-
“ quest, he always seasoned the

A SECOND POSTSCRIPT. lxi

“ Refusal with every Circumstance
“ of Benevolence, which might
“ render the Disappointment less
“ grievous. His Religion was of
“ that purest and noblest Kind,
“ which true Christianity inspires :
“ It was Piety without Superstition,
“ Devotion without Hypocrisy, and
“ Faith which *worketh by Love.*

“ Conscious of the Uprightness
“ of his own Heart, and of the
“ Sincerity of his Belief of the
“ Doctrines and Precepts of the
“ Gospel, he was willing to think
“ the best of other People's Prin-
“ ciples, and to live the FRIEND
“ OF ALL MANKIND.

“ Having no selfish Views, nor
“ private Interests of his own to
“ serve, he was always ready to
“ sacrifice his Preferments, his For-
“ tune, and even his Life to the
“ Safety

lxii A SECOND POSTSCRIPT.

“Safety of his Majesty’s Person,
“to the Ease and Success of his
“Adminiftration, and to the Per-
“petuity of the PROTESTANT
“ESTABLISHMENT ; looking on
“that Establishment as the only
“Support of the CHURCH of ENG-
“LAND ; as the Bulwark of our
“CIVIL LIBERTY, and the sureft
“Defence of the Independency of
“EUROPE.”

CON-

CONCLUSION OF THE
P R E F A C E.

THE Editor begs Leave to
conclude with a few Lines
taken from the Monument erected
to the Memory of Mr. *Waller*, in
the Church-yard at *Beconsfield*,
with the Addition of a Word or
two,

Hos honores extremos, qua-
lescunque sunt, *quos ipse fugit*,
VENERANDO PRESULI, de se opti-
mè merenti, grati animi pignus,
dedit

Cultor olim Observantissimus,

GULIELMUS DUNCOMBE.

JAN. 10, 1763.

f

A'D-

ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE Sermons have been printed above *Four* Years, but the Publication has been so long delayed by some Incidents, which it is hoped there will be no Occasion to remember.

The Profits, that may arise from this Edition, will be paid to the Treasurer of the *London* Infirmary. The last Sermon, in this Collection, was originally *preached* and *printed*, in the Year 1747, for the Benefit of that excellent Charity.

ERRORS OF THE PRESS.

In the Preface. P. 11, Line 8, read *displayed*.

In the Sermons. P. 38, *penult*. strike out the Words, *silently, secretly, and effectually*. P. 189, read—1747. P. 207, Line the 7th, from the Bottom, read *our* Posterity. P. 241, Line the 8th, from the Bottom, strike out *leave*.

A
T A B L E
OF THE
TEXTS to each SERMON.

S E R M O N I.

MAT. xi. 5.

And the Poor have the Gospel preached unto them.

Page 1

S E R M O N II.

MAT. v. 7.

Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy.

41

S E R M O N III.

I PET. ii. 13, 14.

Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, as Supreme; or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.

79

S E R-

S E R M O N IV.

LUKE x. 36, 37.

Which now of these Three thinkest thou was Neighbour unto him that fell among the Thieves? And he said, He that shewed Mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. 119

S E R M O N V.

ECCLES. viii. 2.

I counsel thee to keep the King's Commandment, and that in regard of the Oath of God. 165

S E R M O N VI.

ROM. i. 32.

Who knowing the Judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of Death, not only do the same, but have Pleasure in those that do them. 193

S E R M O N VII.

MAT. vi. Part of the 19th and 20th Verses.

Lay not up for yourselves Treasures upon Earth—but lay up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven. 233

A S E R-

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the
INCORPORATED SOCIETY
For the
Propagation of the G O S P E L in
Foreign Parts ;

At Their
ANNIVERSARY MEETING
In the Parish Church of St. MARY-LE-BOW,
On Friday, February 17, 1737-8.

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SEARSON

Entered before me

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S E R M O N I.

MATTHEW xi. 5.

*And the Poor have the Gospel
preached unto them.*

ST. *John* is represented in the Gospel, as the Messenger and Forerunner of our Blessed Saviour, sent to give Notice to the *Jews*, and prepare them for the Reception of that extraordinary Person ; who had for a long Time been expected, and at that particular Time was so, with more than ordinary Attention, under the Character of the *Messiah*.

St. *John* was a Man of great Austerity of Life, and the Purport of his Doctrine was *Repentance* ; the Necessity of which, he inculcated from the Argument of the near approaching of *Christ's* Kingdom,

B 2 . whose

whose Foundation was to be laid in Holiness and Integrity of Life. By the Freedom of his Rebukes at Court and upon the Person of *Herod*, he had drawn upon himself the Displeasure of that wicked Prince, who, at the Solicitation of a lewd Adulteress, threw him into Prison, where, in a little time, he put an End to his Life. Before his Death, the Report of the Doctrine and Miracles of *Jesus* had reached him; and therefore, from the Prison where he was, he sent two of his Disciples to enquire from the Mouth of Our Lord himself, more for their Instruction than his own, "Whether he was the Person that " was to come, or whether they were to " look for another*."—*The Person that was to come*, i. e. the *Messiah*, the Desire and Expectation of the Nations, particularly, and as it were proverbially, distinguished under that Title. —This was the Question; the Answer to which was given, not in a direct and positive Manner, but, as the Importance of it required, in such a large

* Mat. xi. 3.

S E R M O N I. 5

and instructive Way, as should preclude all manner of Doubt about the Truth of it; —representing, in as few Words as might be, the *Character* of our Blessed Saviour, and intimating its perfect Correspondency with what the Prophets had foretold concerning him; so that at the same Time he asserted, he thought fit to prove, the Divinity of his Mission: For *Jesus* answered and said unto them, “Go, and shew *John* “those Things, which ye do hear and “see, the Blind receive their Sight, the “Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, “and the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised “up, and the Poor have the Gospel preach- “ed unto them *.” As if it had been said, you want to be assured of the Truth and Certainty of my being the *Messiah*;—‘I ‘am that extraordinary Person, and ye ‘yourselves may observe, if you please, ‘from what ye hear me preach, and see ‘me do, that I give most plain and irrefragable Proofs of my Mission: My *Doctrine* ‘and my *Works* bespeak my Character, ‘one very distinguishing Mark of which

* Mat. xi. 4, 5.

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‘ is, “ That the Poor have the Gospel
“ preached unto them.”

This is the *Connection* of the Text, of which I have taken upon me at present to consider the *Significancy* and *Import*: For this must be looked upon, as one very remarkable Characteristic of the Goodness of our Blessed Saviour, and the Excellency of his Religion, That it is calculated for the *common* Use and Benefit of the World; like the Light of the Sun, diffused with universal Equity and Munificence, and though made up of the most precious and valuable Truths, yet all communicated with free Grace and Bounty; not perplexed, as the greatest Part of the Law of *Moses* was, by a vain and haughty Casuistry; not confined within the Studies of Philosophers, or locked up in the Cabinets of Princes; but dispersed abroad for the common Instruction, and, if they will follow it honestly, for the common Happiness of the Poor and the Rich, of the Ignorant and of the Learned, “ The Poor have the Gospel preached unto them.”—Such is the

Excellency

S E R M O N I. 7

Excellency of the Christian Doctrine, and such the Condescension and Integrity of its Teacher, that, his Religion is accommodated to the Use and Understanding of the *poorest* People — Persons of that low and despised Character, that they had hitherto by the *Jewish* Teachers, the perfidious Guardians of the Law of *Moses*, and in almost all the Instructions of the Philosophers, been thought either unworthy, or incapable of good Information: For, except in some few Instances, where there was a more than ordinary natural Strength of Understanding, the Gross of the common People were kept in almost impenetrable Darkness, as to the great Truths of Religion; knew nothing at all of the Nature and Being of God, and as little consequently of the true Principles and Obligations of Moral Virtue: Not that the World was altogether without Light in those momentous Points, or that the Minds of Men were rendered incapable of comprehending them; but Superstition and Idolatry, the Parents of bad Morals, were the reigning Corruptions; and they, who saw through the

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Folly and Wickedness of those Practices, either through Pride and Interest *would not*, or through Fear and Weakness of Mind *dared not* communicate their Knowledge. It appears to be the Design of God therefore, in his own Time, by the sending of his Son, and the Dispensation of his Gospel, to break through these Corruptions; to inform and raise human Nature; to assist, and as it were, rekindle the Light of Reason; to clear up, and defend and propagate true Religion all over the World; and that not so much for the Instruction of the wise and great Men in it (who were in Possession, it may be, already of very important Truths, but either made no Use of them, or, but a vain one, while their Practices contradicted them); as of the Poor, and Low, and Humble, whose natural Capacities were as good; and whose Hearts were, at least, as honest, as those of the Highest and most Learned: "The
 " Poor had the Gospel preached unto
 " them:" There was nothing in this System of Religion, that was crafty or self-interested, dark and abstruse; that was, in the main
 Design

S E R M O N I 9

Design of it, too refined for common Understanding; but, as it consisted of honest, and clear, and rational, and practicable Precepts, it was communicated freely to those, for whom it was designed, and that was the whole World. — The Wisdom of its Instructions was so plain, and strong, and convincing, that they were neither *below* the Care of the *wisest* Men, nor *above* the Use and Comprehension of the *meanest*: The Poor, &c.

I propose, in considering farther this one peculiar Advantage of the Gospel (no Religion before it having made that Provision for such general Instruction), to dispose my Thoughts under these three Heads.

I. To consider what it was that was preached to the Poor under the Character of the Gospel. — For it is mentioned here as a very extraordinary Privilege, and what deserved to stand in the Rank with the most miraculous Acts of our Saviour's Goodness to Mankind, such as giving
Limbs

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Limbs to the Lame, Hearing to the Deaf,
Sight to the Blind, and Life to the Dead.

II. Where lay the particular Reason
and Advantage of the Gospel being
preached to the Poor.

III. Reflect with what Advantages in
general, in point of Instruction and the
Enforcement of true Religion, this admirable
Dispensation was communicated.

T H E S E Considerations dispatched,
there will be room perhaps for one or
two useful Inferences, not unsuitable, I
will hope, to the Occasion of our present
Assembling.

And, *First*, I am to consider what it was
that was preached to the Poor, under the Character
of the Gospel; and that, if we peruse the sacred
Records, beyond all Controversy our best Direction,
will be found to consist, in the main, in these great
Points, which follow: The Knowledge and Worship
of the true God, — The Divinity of our Saviour's
Mission,

S E R M O N I. 11

Mission,—A clear and certain and consistent Scheme of moral Duty, not itself newly discovered, but vindicated from Error and Corruption, and false Casuistry; represented in its pure Agreements with the Dictates of Natural Reason, and farther recommended and enforced by new Arguments and Motives: and, as an Addition to all this, the great Doctrine of Mercy and Forgiveness of our Sins, through the Mediation and Redemption of Christ Jesus.

The Knowledge and Worship of the true God was the first Point of Instruction, and the Foundation of the Christian Doctrine: For they were not only the ignorant and stupid Vulgar, who had given into the Practices of Idolatry, but the Corruption reached a great deal farther and higher; as the Apostle intimates in his Epistle to the *Romans*, That the Professors of Wisdom were Fools in that respect, and had “changed
“ the Glory of the incorruptible God into
“ an Image made with Hands, like to corruptible Man, worshipping the Creature
“ more

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“ more than the Creator* :” And the same Apostle, observing, when he was at *Athens*, the politest City in the Heathen World, that all their Religious Duties were degenerated to the foulest Idolatry; begins his Instructions to them, with Declarations of the true God, that made the World, and all things in it.

And this is the plain Doctrine of the Gospel upon this important Head—That, there is but One God; That he is Good, All-powerful, All-wise, the Maker and Governor of the World; of a pure and spiritual and invisible Nature; whose Worship consists in Prayers to, and Praises of him, and in a sincere Love of, and Obedience to his Commands; and, so far as our Natures will admit, in an Imitation of his high Perfections.

The Divinity of our Saviour's Mission is another great Point in Christianity, and it stands proved in the Gospel, from the Correspondency of his Character, and the Time

* Rom. i. 23.

S E R M O N I. 13

of his Appearance, to what the Prophets had foretold concerning him; from the Purity and Goodness of his Doctrine; from his Miraculous Actions (the plain Effects of Mercy and Power in Conjunction); from his Birth, his Life, his Death, his Resurrection and Ascension; all together amounting to the clearest Demonstration, That he was the Messiah, the long expected Prophet, the great High Priest, the King of *Israel*, the Saviour of Mankind, the beloved Son of God, sent from the Bosom of his Father.

We are farther instructed by the Gospel, in a very plain and rational Scheme of Moral Duty, suited to every Man's Understanding, and to all the several Occasions of human Life; and recommended to us, in many strong and amiable Pictures, as the most beautiful Scheme of Action, most wise and reasonable; and, what is beyond every other Argument, as agreeable to the Will and Commands of our great Creator.— A Scheme of Morals not made up of many new Discoveries; though it may perhaps
be

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be justly called a new Discovery, that true Religion did indeed consist in the Practice of Moral Virtues: However, admitting that the Gospel Instructions on that Head were not new, but the Dictates of natural Reason, it was a great Thing for the World, that such a Religion was taught, and made plain universally:—That the Labour of Inquiry was prevented, and every Man had his Duty laid before him in a short and intelligible Manner, and the Practice of it enjoined by the Authority of God.

It was not the Design of Christianity certainly, to make a New Creation in a literal Sense, but to restore Men to that Rectitude of Mind and Manners, which was the Purpose of the Old one; for Men are naturally formed for the Practice of Virtue, and, without it, cannot possibly be happy: The Gospel therefore does not alter the Nature of Virtue, but establish its Practice, by assuring us, that God is pleased with it; and will, by the secret Workings of his Spirit, assist good Men in the Performance of it, and that he hath made such Provision for
their

S E R M O N I. 15

their Reward in another World, that it is become not only our reasonable Duty, but, under all Circumstances, even of the greatest Distress, most eligible and advantageous.

It was, before, a Matter of much Difficulty to understand what was properly Religion; it had been so obscured and blended with the corrupt Additions of Men: Our Saviour purified it, taught Men what it was, and how to value it; and, to guard against the bad Practices of designing or superstitious Men, added but two positive Duties; and those of very plain and easy Significancy, and, in their Design and Operation, perfective of the Christian Life.

Add to all this, that other great Doctrine of the Gospel, on which all our Expectations of future Happiness seem to turn; and that is, the Mercy and Placability of the Deity, who, though "he is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*," has yet assured us, that if we endeavour *faithfully*

* Hab. i. 13.

and

and *sincerely* to do his Will, and from human Frailty, fail in the Performance; he will consider, and compassionate, and forgive our Miscarriages, through the Mediation and Redemption of CHRIST JESUS. And this must be looked upon, as a very extraordinary Act of Grace and Bounty to his Creatures, That God, in the Person, and by the Doctrine of our Saviour, should find out a Way to save us from the Dominion, and, if we are not wanting to ourselves, from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin.— It is this peculiar Privilege, perhaps, which is the principal Reason, why the Gospel is described in very high and triumphing Expressions, “ Glad Tidings of Salvation, “ Joy to all People, Peace on Earth, and “ Good Will towards Men*,” and why the Great Author of it is stiled the Mediator, the Redeemer, and the Saviour of the World. And thus much for the Substance of the Gospel Doctrine : It consists in the Knowledge and Worship of the true God,—in establishing the divine Mission of our Saviour,—

* Luke ii. 14.

S E R M O N I. 17

in giving a plain and clear Rule of Duty, enforced in its Practice by new and better Encouragements than Men were before acquainted with, or convinced of;—in the Addition of two most wise and significant Institutions, the Badges of our Profession, very natural Memorials of our Obligations to our great Master, and powerful Motives to Obedience; and in the Assurance of having our Sins pardoned by the Mercy and Intercession of our Redeemer.

I proceed to consider,

2dly. What peculiar Reason and Advantage there was in it, That the *Poor* should have the Gospel preached unto them: For, as it was a Dispensation designed for the whole World, and God is no Respector of Persons, why, in communicating so considerable a Benefit, is any Distinction made between the Poor and the Rich? To this it may be answered, That, considering the State of the World in our Saviour's Time, The Poor stood most in *need* of the Gospel, and were most *disposed* to embrace it.

C

First,

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First, The Poor stood most in *need* of the Gospel, I mean in point of Information, for, with regard to Life and Manners, it is another Question.—But, in point of Knowledge, it is probable, it is indeed certain, That what Light there was in the World, shone chiefly upon the higher Parts of it, while, with respect to the lower, the People sat in Darkness, and their Knowledge was as mean as their Condition.

The *Jewish* Doctors, the unworthy Representatives of *Moses*, had concealed or eluded the best Part of his Religion, and, in our Saviour's Time, had dressed it up in so ridiculous a Garb, and so little consulted the Honour of the Deity; the Credit of their Legislator, and the Good of Mankind by their Interpretations of it, that they drew upon themselves the severest Rebukes from that divine Teacher: He often calls upon them, and always for their Faults: For indeed the Religion, which they taught, was such, that a wise Man could not but condemn: It was hardly possible, but that the Meanest must be led to entertain very low
and

S E R M O N I. 19

and unbecoming Thoughts of God himself, whom they represented as its Author,

And then for the Philosophers, the Repositories and Masters of Knowledge in other Parts of the World, their Conversation, if they lived at all in Society, lay chiefly at the Courts, or in the Company of the Great Men, and they were commonly too proud to instruct the Vulgar;—neither indeed, considering the Power of Superstition, was it safe for them to do so, unless they had had Honesty enough, which very few of them had, to venture their Lives for the sake of Truth: This courageous Integrity was not indeed to be expected from Men, who considered Truth, when they hit upon it, rather as Matter of Amusement to a speculative Mind, than as the Foundation of virtuous Practice. Besides, they themselves were many of them in the dark, and had so puzzled and perplexed the clearest Truths, that Men in low Stations of Life and common Capacities wanted both the Understanding and the Leisure to attend their Lectures.

It appears by their Writings, that there was indeed a great deal of fine Sense and admirable Instruction among the Heathen Philosophers ; but still it appears too in the History of their several Nations, that the Gross of the common People were not at all the better for them. They were kept in the Duties of their several Stations by the Polity and the Severity of Laws, and were obliged to be punctual in their Religious Worship, that is, in all the Tricks and Practices of Idolatry ; but were entirely ignorant of the True God and the Nature of his Worship, of his Providence and Government over the Moral World, of the Beauty, and Reasonableness, and Consequence of a virtuous Life : And though they might have some dark and perplexing Fears (constitutionally annexed to their very Being) about another World, yet that natural Apprehension seems to have been an Instrument only in the Hands of their Priests to support the Reverence of their false Deities, was seldom or never applied to the Service of Moral Virtue, and, where it was, had no certain and regular Effect upon their
Lives

S E R M O N I. 21

Lives and Conversations. Of all this, I think, we may in some measure see the Proofs in the present Circumstances of the Heathen World, the Image and Resemblance of the Old one; and from the same Reflection be convinced, that, for the Service of the lower People, who make up the Bulk of Mankind, no Way could so effectually inform their Minds, and correct their Practices, as the Delivery of so clear, so wise, so good a Religion as the Christian, communicated by so disinterested, so condescending, so perfectly holy and unblameable, and so great a Person as our Saviour Christ Jesus.

Secondly, The Poor had the Gospel preached unto them, because they were, upon the whole, best disposed to receive it. The higher Part of Men, it must be owned, had the Advantage of them in this respect, if their Tempers had been suitable to their Knowledge; but all the Advantage which they had from thence, was lost in the Corruption of their Manners. For, usually speaking, they were proud, and vain, and luxurious,

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had an Interest in the Establishment of Idolatry, and had, many of them, abused their Knowledge, and formed to themselves a Set of loose and Atheistical Principles, to justify their loose and Atheistical Practices: So that they were very unlikely to be wrought upon by so honest and pure a Scheme of Religion as the Christian, which would more probably make its Progress among Men, who, by the Circumstances of their Station, were low and humble, placed out of the Opportunity and Temptations to Luxury, ignorant indeed of the true Religion, but not Enemies to it, or engaged, by any Interests, to oppose its Progress, --- whose Unhappiness it was to be led blindfold into the common Corruptions, but who had no hand in introducing, or supporting them. Here, I say, there was more room for the true Religion to take effect, than among the Designs and Prejudices of the Great Ones; and Men, of this Temper and Station, would naturally fall into a good Opinion of a Religion which was so different from the slavish Corruptions of Heathenism, and proceeded

S E R M O N I. 23

ceeded from an Author of so holy and divine a Character: To them it was a very uncommon Favour to be so considered as they were, by our blessed Saviour; and it could not but raise the Attention and Gratitude of the Ignorant, but honest, Vulgar, when he cleansed their Lepers, gave Feet to the Lamè, Eyes to the Blind, Ears to the Deaf, and the Gospel to the Poor. --- This was exceeding gracious and wise in our Blessed Saviour; the Poor most wanted his Information and Assistance, and were most likely to attend to and follow his Instructions, and therefore to the Poor he imparted them. I proceed to consider,

Thirdly, in general, the Advantages with which the Gospel was preached, and of what Use it was to the World in point of Information. Now this has in a great measure appeared from what has been mentioned already, as the Substance of the Christian Doctrine: For he that knows any thing of the State of the Heathen World, when our Saviour appeared in it, will very easily persuade himself of what Advantage

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it was to have the Christian Knowledge propagated among Men. For to make an Estimate of the Benefit of this great Dispensation, we are not so much to consider how great a Part of it was knowable by the Light of Reason, or how much actually was known by Heathens of superior Honesty and Understanding, but what was the Case with the Body of the common People.--- Here, therefore, we will fix our Foot, and from this Point of View, take a Prospect of the Heathen World; and consider, whether it was not a most amazing Instance of the Goodness of God to Men, to send his Son into the World upon so important an Errand as the Gospel, to revive the Knowledge, and instruct the most ignorant in the acceptable Worship of the true Creator; --- to lay before them a clear and full Scheme of Duty, confirmed by its own Reason, by the Authority and Miracles of its Teacher, and illustrated by his Example; recommended by the Promise of God's Grace and Assistance, and enforced by the weighty Sanctions of another World; --- and to satisfy Men, moreover, of the
Mercy

S E R M O N I. 25

Mercy and Placability of the Deity, whose Goodness tempered his Severity and Justice, and had found out a Way by the Mediation and Death of Jesus, to pardon the Frailties and Infirmities of human Nature.—This, surely, was a Scheme of Religion, full of very comfortable and useful Reflection to Men, who lived under the Sense of Sin, and the Horror of Guilt and Punishment, but saw no Way to get out of it; who had no Notions at all, or very uncertain ones, of a future Life; not enough, if rightly applied, to keep them steady in the Practice of their Duty, or to support them under the Adversities of the World; --- who saw even their Moral Duty very imperfectly: — Nature, indeed, had marked out the great Lines of it, and Magistracy supported the Face of the Social Virtues, But the Purity and Perfection of a virtuous Mind, as, under the Inspection of an all-seeing Judge, the Foundation of a virtuous Course of Action, was little thought of, or insisted on, among the Vulgar; who, being ignorant of the true God, had all their religious Attention directed to the Rites and Service of
the

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the false ones. --- Surely, therefore, if this was in fact the Case of the Gentile World, the Christian Religion was a vast Advantage, and might, with great Propriety, be called, “a Light shining in a dark Place;” * dark, not by the Appointment, or through any Defect of Wisdom and Goodness in the Creator, but through the Perverseness of Men, who had made a shift almost to extinguish “that Light, which lighteth every Man, that cometh into the World †.” For Christianity was an Advantage, not so properly to Reason, as to Men; and, if the ancient Apologists may be credited, the Effect, which it had upon Mankind, was very wonderful. The Benefit is now grown common, and Men are almost insensible of the Change; but, when the Gospel was first preached to the Poor, it drew the World after it, and made a most surprizing Alteration, both in the Knowledge and Manners of Men. From whence it is very natural to make such Inferences as these which follow.

* 2 Pet. i. 19.

† John i. 9.

S E R M O N I. 27

First, That, considering the deplorable State of the World, when it appeared, and the miraculous Effects it was attended with in its Preaching, we are exceedingly beholden to the Grace of God for the Light of the Gospel.

It must be said indeed, before the Gospel Dispensation, and in every Age of the World, Men had their Reason to guide them, which, if faithfully followed, would have directed them to the Knowledge of the true God, and of true Religion.—But this in Fact was of small avail, and, whatever was the Cause of it, Reason had lost its Ground, the Knowledge of the true God was obliterated, and, consequently, of true Religion. God, therefore, was graciously pleased to interpose by an extraordinary Revelation, and to make an easy and universal Discovery of the important Things in Religion;—most of them perhaps deducible from Reason, but with great Difficulty and Application, more than the *ignorant* Part of Mankind *could* employ about them, and more than the *corrupt* Part *would*.

The

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The Gospel-Precepts of Life are no other than reasonable Precepts, it is confessed; but the Favour of God to us is not the less remarkable surely, nor less the Subject of our Gratitude, because he enjoins nothing else by Revelation, in point of Practice, but what Reason and Interest would make our voluntary Duty: This one Circumstance is Proof to Demonstration, That Christianity is a pure and genuine Religion, derived from the same Fountain with our Being and our Reason. This therefore must be insisted on as a most weighty Argument to us, to be thankful to God, to obey his Gospel ourselves, and promote its Influence over others; and not, as some foolish Professors of Wisdom do, sit down and raise Difficulties about the particular Time of its Appearance, and the small Extent of it, in the present Situation of the World, and other Things of that nice and impertinent Enquiry, and then to quarrel with the Dispensations of God, because we cannot solve all the Difficulties which attend them. Whatever Nations are at present without the Gospel, or however long it was, before
its

S E R M O N I. 29

its Propagation among Men, this we are very sure of, That we have it : and are we fretful and uneasy, that God has favoured us with so distinguishing a Privilege ? There is no End of satisfying this captious and discontented Humour.—Now that we enjoy the Gospel, and owe more, much more, in point of Knowledge, to its Discoveries, than we are well aware of,—“ There is
 “ nothing in it, we cry, but what is reasonable ; the main important Truths of
 “ it are as old as the Creation : It is but a
 “ *Republication* of the Law of Nature :—
 “ why then this expensive and needless
 “ Dispensation, and why so much Pains
 “ taken to inform us, of what we might
 “ have known as well without it ?” Admitting all this to be true (which indeed is a false and partial Account of Christianity) we must yet observe ;

On the other hand, Had God not interposed, but left the World involved in Darkness and Idolatry, if the same Objectors had lived in that woeful State, and had had Discernment enough to be sensible of the

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Difference, How would they have exclaimed against the Hardship of it, “ That, “ since the Thing was so easy to be effected, “ the Deity should not condescend to in- “ form and illuminate the Minds of Men, “ to teach them what he was, and in what “ Manner to be acceptably worshipped, “ what End and Purpose he created Man “ for, what was their Duty while they “ lived, and what would become of them, “ when they died.” — Why, this very Thing God has condescended to do in the fullest and most express Manner, and yet Men are not satisfied---What is Perverseness, if this is not so? It is the very Temper, which our Saviour censured in the *Pharisees*, comparing it to the Frowardness of Children, whom neither Mirth nor Seriousness could please --- a Conduct pardonable indeed in Children, but an huge Reproach to Men, and an Argument how much even our Penetration and Understanding may hurt us, when it is not under the Guidance of Modesty, and a due Submission and Resignation to the Ways of Providence. Considering the Nature and
Tendency

S E R M O N I. 31

Tendency of our Saviour's Doctrine, it were hardly to be conceived, that ever there should have come a Time, when it should be made a Question, whether the Wisdom and Goodness of God was not most apparent in providing, That the Poor had the Gospel preached unto them.

Secondly, Hence we may be taught to pass a just Judgment upon the Iniquity of the *Roman* Church, and how much their Practice tends to defeat the Designs of Providence; in shutting up the Holy Scriptures, where they can do it, in an unknown Tongue; denying the People the Use of that living Water; and, instead of solid, and useful, and Christian Doctrines, amusing them with lying Legends, idle Tales, and fruitless Mysteries. No Thanks to these faithless Stewards of the Gospel, that the World is not sunk again into Barbarism and Idolatry --- a Thing in Fact, so far effected in their Communion, that the strongest Argument, of the Ineffectualness of the Christian Doctrine, to support the true Worship of God, is taken from the prodigious

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digious Ignorance, and the very monstrous
 Absurdities practised in their public Service.
 And the best and strongest Way to answer
 this Objection, is to appeal from their
 Practices to the Tenor of the New Testa-
 ment, and from thence demonstrate, That
 the Fault does not lie in the Doctrine of
 Christ Jesus, but in the Wickedness of
 those, who will not suffer the Poor either
 to read or to hear the Gospel, till they have
 garbled and corrupted it. So that, tho'
 the Men of that Communion do pretend,
 as an Argument of their being the true
 Church of Christ, that they can work Mi-
 racles, restore the Lame, give Sight to the
 Blind, and Hearing to the Deaf, yet so
 modest they have always been, as to omit
 laying claim to this other more Infallible
 Mark than all the rest, " That the Poor
 " have the Gospel preached unto them."

But the Time reminds me to hasten to
 the last Inference, in which I would re-
 commend to your Approbation and kind
 Assistance, the Design of these our chari-
 table Assemblies, in which we endeavour
 the

S E R M O N I. 33

the Success and Propagation of Christianity, which was first established by Miracle, and has since been supported and spread abroad by Teaching, assisted by the Grace of God.

The Christian Religion is a most complete and perfect Institution, the Means which the Wisdom of God makes use of, to instruct and save the World ; and therefore it would be great Unmercifulness in those, who understand it themselves, not to communicate such useful Knowledge :— Knowledge, that is not calculated to amuse or entertain us, or to provide for the little Purposes of a short and transitory Life, but whose Views reach a great deal farther, making Men wise unto Salvation, and securing the great Interests of another State.

Stupidity and Want of Understanding is a great Misfortune, more especially in Matters of the highest Consequence, as the Things of Religion are ; and since the true Way to love God is to know him, and the best Argument for the Practice of Religion is to understand it, it is a Point of most

D

excel-

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excellent Charity and Mercy to inform the Minds of Men, and to let them into the Reason and Beauty of Religion, the Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness, of God, and his unbounded Love to Men in particular, by the most gracious and merciful Dispensation of his Gospel.

It behoves us therefore, it concerns us highly, wherever we plant our Colonies, and transfer our Form of Government, to take particular Care to sow the Seeds of our good Religion, the natural and providential Pledge of their Success and Duration: For, besides the Arguments and Motives to this Duty from common Mercy and Humanity to the Blind and Vicious,—From the express Command of our Saviour,—From the Principle of Gratitude, to the Inhabitants of those fine and fruitful Regions, by whose frugal and painful Industry, this our native Country, the Mother of us all, receives great Strength and Riches,—I say, besides these Motives, we should consider (and that perhaps may please us better) that it is a Matter of worldly Interest and Advantage:

S E R M O N I. 35

vantage : For every Convert to Christianity, or Member secured to our Establishment upon Gospel and Protestant Principles, is a Friend to our Country and Government, as well as to our Religion ; an Argument that ought exceedingly to weigh with us, when we consider the indefatigable Zeal of Popery, both at home and abroad, in propagating the shameful Cause of Tyranny and Superstition.

The Means of our fulfilling this Duty are such as the Providence of God permits to us, and such, as for a long Course of Years have been successfully pursued by this wise and good Society, and will, we hope, continue till its noble Ends are answered.—We pretend not to Miracles (we leave the Pretence of them to a Church, which has nothing else to support its corrupt and foolish Doctrines, but such bold and impious Falshoods) but every thing that can be done by the honest Industry of Christian Men, under the Influence of God's Grace and Providence, is endeavoured to be done by us.

It seeming now that Miracles are ceased, the Props of the Infancy of Christianity, (left, in its maturer Age, to support itself by its own Strength and Reason;) the true Secret of maintaining it, and farthering its Propagation, is to preach it upon the Plan and Authority of the Gospel only, to recommend it in the Spirit of Meekness, joining to the clear Force of Reason the honest Arts and Insinuations of gentle Persuasion; and illustrating it by that, which gave our Saviour himself a great Part of his Authority, and to which he more than once appeals, the pure and shining Example of a good Life.—*That* is indeed the *enchanting* Argument, and, without it, though we talk never so much of being civilized, and boast of the high Privileges of our Religion, an understanding Heathen will contemn and deride us. The plain Truth is, and we must not disguise it; the chief Obstruction in the Conversion of barbarous Nations, and what Miracles themselves could not surmount, arises from the bad Lives of Christians: For, when an honest Savage observes the Cruelty, the Fraud, the Falshood, the Lewdness,

S E R M O N I. 37

ness, and Intemperance, of Christians, it is a very natural Effect, and what one must excuse, if not commend in him, if he scorns to be converted by such Men, and wraps his own Religion more close about him. Christianity is more the Religion of the Heart, than of the Head, and the Excellence and Majesty of it consists in the Reasonableness and Simplicity of its Doctrines, productive of an innocent, and useful, and pious Life. Agreeably to this Notion of it, our Saviour here directs his Doctrine to the Poor, and speaks of that Circumstance as its best Recommendation. From whence we may be sure, it must be free from Superstition, against which they needed Caution and Instruction most—disentangled from the Subtleties of Controversy, of which, *happily* for them, their Heads were quite incapable, and consisting of such Things only, as would make them better Men, more useful in their several Families, and better Citizens of the World.

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And therefore if, in all our Endeavours to propagate it, we govern ourselves by this plain and honest Rule, and teach nothing for Christianity, but what God, by Christ, has made so; bid Men live, for instance, under a just Sense, and lively Faith in God, their Creator and Preserver,—In JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, their redeemer and Advocate,—In the HOLY GHOST, their Comforter and Sanctifier; and reverence and obey the Laws of the Holy Gospel, as the wise Oeconomy and Method, which the Providence of God has chosen to instruct and save Mankind; there is no Question to be made, but in God's good Time it will meet with its desired Success;—not spread perhaps with the Noise and Ostentation of Imposture, but, like the pure Gospel at its first Propagation, silently, secretly, and effectually, diffuse its Influence through the World.—

And who knows, but future Times may by Experience, silently, secretly, and effectually, find a singular Providence in this
Charitable

S E R M O N I. 39

Charitable Work of ours; and we may now be providing a Refuge for true, though distressed, Christianity in a distant World, if God, in the just Punishments of his Administration, should remove its blessed Influence from hence.

S E R M O N I I

Charitable Work of our day and we may
now be providing a refuge for true thought
distressed Christianity in a distant World
if God in the just Punishments of his
Administration should remove its place
thence from hence.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART

—

THE SECOND PART
OF THE
S E R M O N I I
BY
THE
REV. FATHER
JOHN
BAPTIST
MARTIN
OF
THE
SACRED
MISSE
OF
THE
CATHOLIC
CHURCH
IN
THE
CITY
OF
NEW
YORK
ON
THE
SUNDAY
EVENING
OCTOBER
THIRTEEN
NINETEEN
HUNDRED
AND
EIGHT
PUBLISHED
BY
THE
AUTHOR
AT
NEW
YORK
1898

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the Right Honourable the

L O R D - M A Y O R,

T H E

Court of A L D E R M E N,

A N D T H E

GOVERNORS of the several *Hospitals*
of the City of *London*,

A T T H E

Parish Church of St. B R I D G E T,

O N

Monday in EASTER-WEEK, 1739.

ST. MARK'S

SERMON

Preached before the Right Honourable the

LORD MAYOR

THE

COUNCIL OF ALDERMEN

AND THE

Governors of the several Hospitals

of the City of London

AT THE

Great Church of St. Mark

on Monday the 11th of January 1713

S E R M O N II.

MATTHEW V. 7.

*Blessed are the Merciful : for they
shall obtain Mercy.*

THE Virtue of Mercy, to the Practice of which we are exhorted in the Text, is one of the great Duties of Natural Religion ; I call it a *great* Duty, because, whether we judge of its Importance from its Suitableness to the Nature of the Deity, and his Rules of acting in the Creation, or from its Friendliness to Human Society, or its Usefulness to every Individual, we shall find it equal to, if not exceeding in its Influence and Perfection, every other Virtue. Our Saviour therefore, upon this great and solemn Occasion, when he is delivering the Substance of his Doctrine for the Instruction and Observance of the World, takes care to distinguish this Virtue, to give it a principal Place in his System of Religion,

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gion, and to recommend it to the Practice of Men, as the best and happiest Thing they can do for themselves or others.—
Blessed are, &c.

Let it be our present Business, if you please, to consider this Precept a little more particularly; for since Mercy is a Duty of such clear and acknowledged Importance, we shall certainly find our Account in a distinct Examination of it, in explaining it as clearly and particularly, and recommending it as forcibly and affectionately as we can. And first, for explaining Mercy, I think there is little or no Difficulty in the general Notion of it. That seems, in a great measure, secured by the Clearness of our common Apprehensions; for the main Lines of our natural Duty are so large and legible, whether from their apparent Reasonableness and Conveniency, or from being written by the Finger of *God*, and woven into our Frame and Constitution, that it is hardly possible for any Man to be ignorant of them.—Certain it is, That if we do err in our Notions about them, the Fault is more

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in our Wills than our Understanding. I might therefore excuse myself from giving a Definition of this Virtue, and send every Man to his own Breast for Information about it.—Or, if I must attempt it, for Method's sake, the clearest Account that I can give of it in Words, is, That it is that Kindness and Benignity of Disposition, by which we are carried to pity the Wants or Weaknesses, or Miseries of others; and, by consequence, if left to ourselves and our natural Inclinations, to supply and relieve them. This Account of Mercy will, I think, include all the Objects about which it can be exercised, when we consider it as a social Virtue, regularly and mutually exerted, in pitying the Infirmities, and relieving the Distresses of one another, in comforting the Afflicted, in instructing the Ignorant, in reclaiming the Wicked, in forgiving Injuries, in departing from our strict Right, and moderating the Severity of Justice; in doing more for the Good of others than we are strictly obliged to do, and in shewing a general Sweetness and Humanity of Temper.—This, I think, is Mercy in its full

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full Extent and Influence ; and it may be of very good practical Use to us, to run over these several Particulars in our Minds a little more distinctly. And first, It is the Property of Mercy to pity the Infirmities of other Men ; to put on, as the Scriptures express it, Bowels of Mercy, to cultivate a Tenderneſs and Humanity of Temper, a quick and ready Feeling of each other's Wants and Pains ; by which I would not be understood to mean a ſoft and unmanly Weakneſs, a Paſſion without the Power and Conſtancy of Reaſon, but a generous Sympathy and Affection, ſteadily and wiſely pitying and conſidering the unhappy Circumſtances of other Men.

And this is what indeed we are naturally carried to, without the Diſcipline of Reaſon, or the Precepts of Religion.—There is ſomething in the Human Conſtitution, that naturally melts at Human Miſfortunes ; and it is well for the World that it is ſo ; for we find in effect, notwithstanding this natural Biſs ; notwithstanding the Reaſonableneſs and Conveniency of this virtuous Diſpoſition ;
notwith-

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notwithstanding its plain Connection with our own Interest, who are so often the Objects of others Pity and Compassion, and the strict Injunction and most engaging Example of our great Master and Saviour *Christ Jesus*; we find I say, that we frequently make a shift to work ourselves up to such an Hardness and Insensibility at each other's Calamities, that we seem to have changed our natural Tempers, and to have become more inhuman than Savages, and obdurate as the Rocks. Not considering, that such Behaviour as this is an huge Reproach to us; for let our Condition in Life be never so high and prosperous, (a Condition most exposed usually to Pride and Inhumanity) Compassion to those below us will neither lessen its Dignity, nor abate its Happiness: It will indeed increase the one, and aggrandize the other; for nothing is more noble and generous, more reasonable in itself, more easy and satisfactory, more becoming a Man, and, as our Saviour assures us here, more agreeable to the Spirit of his Religion, than to be *Merciful*.—Merciful in our Disposition, and Merciful in our actual Charity.

For

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For it is to be considered, that the Relief of Mens Misfortunes is the natural Consequence of Pity and Compassion : Pity must precede our Mercy ; but our Mercy is very incompleat, if it does not produce our Charity ; where actual Charity is impossible, there the Disposition alone will be estimated and rewarded for Mercy ; but nothing can excuse our with-holding our Assistance, where it is in our Power to afford it.—And what, I would ask, are those Circumstances wherein it is not ? It is hardly possible, but that among Men of the same Community, where there is an hearty Compassion for one another's Calamities, there must be, in every Man, a Way to relieve them, by present Help, by Advice, by Interest, by Money, or Solicitation ; or, if all these fail, by our kind and charitable Prayers, and recommending a suffering Fellow-Creature to the merciful Providence of God Almighty.—By one or other of these Ways, it is in every Man's Power to shew his Mercy ; and therefore not to assist another in his Sufferings, is not only short of the merciful Disposition of a Christian,

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Christian, but an Argument moreover of great Savageness and Inhumanity:

I mentioned it as another Property of Mercy, to comfort the Afflicted ; by which I would be understood principally to mean relieving one another in all the Distresses of our Minds. It is there, that we are liable to the greatest and most touching Evils ; for it is on all Hands agreed, and is indeed demonstrable, that the Pains of the Body are no way comparable to the Distresses of the Mind.—Its Agonies are inexpressible ; and, whether they arise from Guilt, from Fear, from Weakness, or from outward Circumstances, it is not only an Instance of the kindest Friendship and tenderest Humanity, but of the purest and most excellent Goodness, to sooth and alleviate them ; to advise the Guilty, to fortify the Fearful, to raise and revive the Weak, and to administer the Succours of Reason and Religion to the Broken and Desponding. And this reminds me of another Instance of Mercy to our Fellow-Creatures and Fellow-Christians, which is, instructing the Ignorant,

E giving

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giving them just Notions of the Deity, of his providential Care of, and Love to, Men, in the Religion of *Christ Jesus*, and of their Obligations to Human Society and to Themselves; for certainly the more we know of *God*, and the better we understand ourselves and our Duty, the better and the happier Men we shall be for it. The doing this has always been deemed a Point of great Wisdom, and Goodness, and Mercy, in the Christian Character: It is, in a manner, peculiar to it, and the Reason of its being so is very evident; for, if there be Truth in the grand Doctrine of Christianity, a Resurrection and a Future Life, as the Reward, or Punishment of the Present, nothing is of so much Consequence to Mankind, as to advance the Knowledge, and encourage the Practice, of that good Religion. While this Life only was the Point in view, provided the great Ends of Society were answered, and the Peace and Prosperity of the Public tolerably secured, it might be thought there was no great Occasion to be extremely solicitous about cultivating the Minds of the lower People; the

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the Consequences of their Ignorance were seen, and, if never so bad, were of a short Duration.—Not so, when an happy or a miserable Eternity depends upon their present Behaviour; This is a Point of Consequence, that must alarm and stir the Thoughts of Men; and a sincere Christian, thoroughly and affectionately convinced of this, will find his Humanity strongly touched in the Reflection, and exert every Instance of his merciful Compassion in spreading such solid and useful Instructions around him, as will best inform the Minds, and most effectually mend the Lives, of those, who may be lost to all Eternity for want of such good-natured and pious Instructions.

It is another Part therefore of the merciful Man's Character, to use the most prudent and compassionate Care he can to reclaim the Wicked. No Man, that has a Concern and Tenderness for the Welfare of another, especially if he be of near Relation, or indeed upon the Foot of common Humanity, but must be grieved at the Conduct of a Man abandoned to Wickedness.

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There is something so shameful in a wicked Life, so injurious to the Reputation and Interest of one's Friend, so mischievous to Society, to the Comfort and Happiness of a Man's own Life, and of such dreadful Consequence hereafter, that the Sight of it cannot but raise the Compassion of a merciful and good-natured Man, and consequently procure his Care and Assistance:—A prudent and well-governed Care, I mean; not any impertinent, and unreasonable, and pettish Reproofs, but just, and wise, and well-timed Instructions, such as will shew a Love and Charity to the Person, and an Hatred only of his Vices.—There is a Way most certainly of advising, and oftentimes reclaiming a wicked Man; and Mercy and Prudence will find it out, and apply it; for Wickedness is a State of Life much worse than Misfortune, and more properly the Object of our mutual Care and Assistance; and he that is recovered from it, by the Kindness and Benevolence of another, will be very apt, (while the Experience of the Change is warm upon him) to express his Gratitude, and pray for the Reward of his Bene-

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Benefactor, in the good Words of our Saviour here, *Blessed are the Merciful, &c.*

Again, Forgiveness of one another, in the Case of Affronts and Injuries, is another Property of Mercy.

This is very largely and expressly enjoined us by the Gospel; it is the Voice of Nature and Reason; it is necessary for the Peace and mutual Comfort of Society; and the Sense of its Obligation is so generally and well understood, that, in common Phrase, it is almost appropriated to furious, and revengeful, and implacable Men, that they are *unmerciful*; and indeed nothing is a stronger Instance of a savage and inhuman Nature, than to be malicious and revengeful, implacable to those who have offended us, inexorable to those who desire to be received to Favour, and cruel to those who are under us. *If ye forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your Trespases* *. This is expressly asserted by our Saviour, and the revengeful

* Luke v. 26.

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Man would do well to consider it maturely.—But if he will not forbear Revenge out of a *good* Principle, let him do it from a *bad* one; let his *Pride* restrain him, and let him consider, that nothing debases him so much, as the indulging such an hateful Passion: Even this would be something; and in time perhaps he might be convinced, That Compassion is the true Principle of Forgiveness; and that Men, who are themselves so subject to Miscarriages and Infirmities, who so often stand in need of Forgiveness from one another, and All from God, can practise no Point of Duty, that will more become them, than Forgiveness of Injuries. And for the same Reason pretty much, Mercy obliges us, in many Instances to depart from what is our strict Right, to sacrifice a little to the Peace of Society, and the Welfare and Interest of our Neighbour. In the Scriptures we find, and often in other moral Writers, that *Justice* and *Mercy* are mentioned together, intimating probably, that they ought to be practised in Conjunction; for *Mercy* is a more lovely Virtue, and argues more Goodness than *Justice* does, the
one

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one being a strict Debt, and the other a Favour and Kindness.—The Strictness of *Justice* may, in some Instances, be great Unmercifulness; and *Mercy* there comes in as a Check upon this rigid Virtue, and governs and tempers its Severity; it may indeed be said of *Mercy* in its general Influence, that it is the Mixture of that, which constitutes the Happiness of human Life, by moderating *Justice*, by making Wisdom charitable and useful, and Power beneficent.—It is in some Respects, in Men, as it is in God, our great Original; Justice, Wisdom, and Power, may make us formidable, but Goodness and Mercy make us amiable. This therefore is another indisputable Point of Mercy, to depart from our Right, in Compassion to the Wants of other People. Nay further, it is the Goodness and Generosity of Mercy to do more for the Good of others, than we are strictly obliged to do; for where true Goodness, and not our own Conveniency, is the Motive of our Actions, the Accomplishment of the Good of others will be the only End of them; and in the Distribution of Rewards,

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as well as in the Way of strict Sale and Bargain, I will not consider so much the Pains and Labour, as the Wants of a Fellow-Creature. This is that merciful Justice, of which there are some fine Instances in the Law of *Moses*, and which is essential to the Character and Spirit of Christianity. To close the Character of Mercy, besides these great and important Instances of it, upon which the Well-being of the World depends, and which are the necessary Terms of the Salvation of a Christian, it is further required of us, that we behave to one another, in the *lesser* Offices of Life, with a general Sweetness and Humanity of Temper,

There is a Sort of Mercy in Civility, in inoffensive Deportment, in mutual Forgiveness and Condescension, in charitable and good-natured Turns, in avoiding Scandal and Defamation, in keeping clear of morose, and rude, and broad Language, in settling little Misunderstandings, in right Information, in proper and decent Respects, and in pardoning, and helping our mutual Infirmities.—These, I say, exerted in the lesser
Offices

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Offices of Life, are no inconsiderable Instances of Mercy, nor of small Moment in our civil Conduct, and Conversation, nor at all below the Care and Observance of a Christian. Nor is this all; for there is indeed another Office of Mercy still behind, upon which I must beg Leave to say a Word or two, because the thing seems of greater Importance than Men, at first Sight, are aware of, and that is, Mercy, nay, I will call it Humanity, to the Brute Creation. We style ourselves Lords of the inferior World, and boast in the Dominion which God has given us: 'Tis well; let us therefore behave ourselves like *Kings*, and not like *Tyrants*; let our Power be tempered with Mercy, more especially to those Creatures, which are the Slaves and Drudges of our Pleasures; and, with regard to Others, let us never destroy their Lives, or put them to Pain out of Wantonness, but, when we kill them for our Use or Defence, let us shorten their Pains, and put them to no unnecessary Torture. The Scripture says, that *a righteous Man regardeth the Life of his Beast* *; from

* Prov. xii. 10.

whence

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whence we may reasonably conclude, That this Sort of Mercy, as well as that to one another, will be placed to our future Account. Cruel Sports were thought a very high Reflection upon the Politeness of the *Romans*; and, I am sure, they are a much greater upon the Mercy and Humanity of Christians. But of this enough.

Having thus, very largely, shewn you what is the Quality of Mercy, and how it is, in some general Instances, exerted; I proceed to consider the second Part of the Text, by which the Duty is enforced and recommended, *Blessed*, &c.

Now, I think, in explaining the happy Effects of these great Christian Virtues, enumerated here by our Saviour, it is not only lawful, but incumbent on us, to shew, that they have the Promise of this Life, as well as of that which is to come, and, exclusive of future Rewards, are really eligible for themselves.—They are undoubtedly best for us here, as is plainly the Case of the Virtue we are now speaking of, *a*
kind

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kind and merciful Behaviour. Blessed are,
 &c. First, on account of the Affection itself,
 which is founded on Love and Humanity;
 a pleasant and friendly Passion, pure and
 peaceable, and full of good Fruits to Men;
 and, though it may seem to create us Trou-
 ble by subjecting us to the Pain and Infirmi-
 ties of others, yet the Satisfaction which
 arises from the Sense of doing them good,
 does more than make amends for the Unea-
 siness their Misfortunes give us. Upon
 which Account *Solomon* has said, with great
 Truth and Justice, that *the merciful Man doth*
good to his own Soul, but he that is cruel trou-
bleth his own Flesh *.—There is a Comfort
 and Satisfaction in the merciful Man's Re-
 flections, which, as the wise Man expresses
 it, doth good like a Medicine; whereas the
 After-thoughts of the Cruel and Oppressive
 give them a World of Torment and Vexa-
 tion: Nay, the Exercise of Cruelty in any
 kind must occasion a great deal of present
 Uneasiness; and, though Habits will go far
 in changing our Natures, it is hardly to be
 conceived that a Man can either oppress, or

* Prov. xi. 17.

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neglect to help a miserable Object, without putting a great Force upon his natural Temper.--Now Nature is a very stubborn Thing; and, tho' kept down for a while, it is apt to recoil terribly upon the Man who warps it.

Therefore, Secondly, the Merciful may very properly be pronounced Blessed in their Virtue, because it is acting agreeably to the Bent and Inclination of Nature, which has formed us for Pity and Compassion.—In other Points of Duty, we are put upon thwarting, and breaking our Inclinations, but here we are to follow them; and the Pleasure arises from the Sense of having done so. Neither is there any thing in the Practice of Mercy, that mortifies, or sets us low in the Opinion of the World: On the contrary, to pity, to relieve, to comfort, to instruct, to reclaim, to forgive, to behave with Generosity, sets us upon the superior Side, and is acting a very honourable Part in Life, as our Saviour himself might intimate in that memorable Saying of his, that *it is more blessed to give, than to receive* *. The

* Acts xx. 35.

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hardest Part of the Duty, and that which is most grievous to Men, is the Forgiveness of Injuries ; the Wisdom of which however is sufficiently justified by observing, that for one Man, who has repented the Forgiveness of Injuries, ten thousand have regretted the Revenge of them. *Blessed therefore are the Merciful* ; the Performance of their Duty is natural and easy, agreeable both to Reason, Religion, and Inclination ; and, in the Opinion of all Observers, bespeaks a generous and noble Nature.

For it is, Thirdly, another happy Circumstance to the Merciful, that the Practice of this Duty procures him certainly a great deal of Esteem and Love. Every particular Man, with whom he converses, finds the Benefit of his Correspondence ; and Society at large is bettered by him. There is a Loveliness in his Example ; no-body has any thing to object against it, but every one praises it.—It is something to be just, and to preserve an inviolable Fidelity ; but this is short of the merciful Man's Deportment.—He is more ; he is kind and generous

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rous and beneficent, and not only as good as, but usually much better than, his Word; so that, commonly speaking, he meets with very fair Quarter from the World: Prosperity gives him great Command and Authority; and in Adversity all are ready to help him, who, in his Turn, has been helpful to all; and therefore Men of all Ranks and Conditions find their Account in the Practice of this Virtue, both in its Esteem and Usefulness; for Mercy, as *Job* beautifully has expressed it, is the Robe and Diadem to the Magistrate, is Nobleness in the Man of Quality, is Honour in the Soldier, and not only the Ornament, but the very Life and Subsistence of the lower World.—*Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy.* They have made the best Provision for it, from the Hands of other Men, or, if they fail of it there, they have a sure Friend in God, whose Providence is engaged in their Favour.

For, Fourthly, This seems implied in our Saviour's Promise, that the merciful Man shall obtain Mercy; that is, the Providence of God will protect and defend him here,
by

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by guarding him against Misfortunes, easing his Pains and Infirmities, supporting his Spirits, and enabling him to bear the Burthen of Human Life with Comfort and Satisfaction.—It is reasonable to think, That the Providence of God will bear a particular Regard to him, who is so much the Image and Resemblance of himself; and the Royal Psalmist, I remember, intimates to us, That God proportions his Reward to the Nature, as well as the Degree, of Men's Virtues.—Charity to the Sick shall be rewarded on the Bed of Sicknes; *for he that considereth the Poor, the Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of Languishing* *. Be that as it will, and as the Wisdom of God shall order it: This however we are sure of, That, Lastly, in the final Event of Things, and at the great and dreadful Judgment of the Last Day, the Merciful Man shall obtain Mercy, and this is of more Moment to him than every other Consideration: There is indeed some Comfort and Satisfaction in the very Practice of Mercy, in the Love and Esteem of Men consequent upon it, and in the

* Psal. xli. 1, 3.

Hopes,

Hopes, that we live in God's present Favour: But the solid and lasting Comfort is, that it will secure us an Interest, and bespeak God's Favour to us in the Day of Judgment. Then it is, that our Mercy will stand us in stead indeed, and then shall we bless ourselves in the Remembrance, when all our good and merciful Actions shall be put in the Balance against the wilful Transgressions, the habitual Vices and Neglects, and all the shameful Practices of a sinful Life.—How far they will weigh must be left to the God of Mercies, and the Goodness of our Blessed Saviour: As yet we cannot understand the full Meaning of that very significant Phrase of *obtaining Mercy*; it can only be known in that tremendous Day, when the Equity and Wisdom of God's Providence will be justified in the Sight of Men and Angels. In the meantime we *must*, and safely we *may*, rely upon the Assurance of our Blessed Saviour, who has left it upon his Authority, to encourage us to the Practice of the most useful, most amiable, and godlike Virtue, and of all others most agreeable to the Character and Spirit

S E R M O N II. 65

Spirit of his Religion; that *the merciful Man shall be blessed, because he will obtain Mercy.*

Having thus explained the Duty of the Text, and enforced it by general Arguments, I come now to recommend it to your Practice from the particular good Effects produced by it in the Hospitals and Workhouses of this Great and Flourishing City; which I cannot do in any manner so lively and affecting as by referring you to the Particulars of the last Year's Account; from whence you will learn much better, than from the feeble Voice of the Preacher, or than from any general Description, what are the several Properties of Mercy; and when you are convinced how much Good has been done by them, in relieving the several Species of Human Want and Misery, as you cannot but highly approve Designs in themselves so excellent, so, I trust, you will encourage them, as God has blessed you with Abilities, in making them still more useful to the Public.

66 S E R M O N II.

The R E P O R T.

YE have now heard by Relation, what Thousands feel in Experience, with what a wise and compassionate Care the Magistracy of this Noble City watches over the Welfare of it; and are truly sensible, I doubt not, what Thanks and Gratitude are due, next under God, to them. They fulfill, ye see, the Character both of the Civil and Religious Magistrate, &c. not confining their Attention to the great Branches of Government, without which Society cannot subsist at all; with a Piety truly Christian they consider the Wants and Distresses of the meanest Individual. It is not my Purpose to flatter, but to remind ye of a Truth, of which the World is Witness, that no Schemes of Public Charity can be laid or executed with greater Judgment or Fidelity, than those which offer themselves annually here for your Approbation and Encouragement. It is a thing very possible, that Charity itself may hurt Religion and Society, and the superstitious Foundations, happily
 now

S E R M O N II. 67

now become Part of this most useful and pious Revenue, are a Proof that even Charity may be defeated and spoiled by Popery; and the pure and beneficent Virtue, full of good Fruits to Men, the Honour and the Ornament of Christianity, be abused to Purposes quite opposite to its Nature; while that Spirit of Delusion reigned here, the specious Name of this good Virtue was made use of often to cheat the World; and the pious and honest-hearted Christian gave away his Substance, or left it at his Death, to be squandered by ill-designing Men in ostentatious Shew, in foolish and hurtful Superstition, or in the Support of ignorant and idle Religionists; and true Charity, for which the whole was intended, and by the Credit of whose Name it was obtained, had indeed the least Share of the Benefaction.—The Piety and resolute Honesty of our Ancestors rescued this excellent Virtue; and we now, God be thanked, see it exercised with a Wisdom truly religious, and truly beneficial to Society.—There is now some Sense and Goodness in the Conduct of it; and the Preacher can

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with Heart and Courage recommend it, when every Branch of this charitable Revenue will stand the Test, and extort the Approbation of the severest Examiner.

One *Hospital*, we are told, takes up and instructs many Hundreds of poor Orphans, and fits them for Business and Navigation, raises them from the Dust, and renders them, in Time, the Pride, the Riches, and the Bulwark, of their native Country. Others open their Gates to Thousands of Sick and Wounded, administer to them the Succours of the best Human Heart, and by a regular and clean, and, so far as their Revenues will allow, plentiful Care of them in their Distresses, restores them to their Health and Limbs, and reinstates them in their several Callings. Discipline and due Correction are the Business of another, where the Severity of Justice is tempered with a proper Mercy; and the lewd Vagrant, deaf to the Voice of Reason and kind Instruction, is taught his Duty in a Way better suited to his disingenuous Nature; and oftentimes it happens, that the Terrors of Infamy, and

S E R M O N II. 69

the Severities of Discipline, will bring Men to their sober Senses, when nothing else will do it: Thus much however is certain, that this proper and seasonable Correction sets a Mark upon Lewdness, and if it does not always restore the Wicked, the Example of it deters, and may preserve the Innocent. The *Hospital of Bethlem* takes Care of the Distracted; a Sort of Charity scarce to be equalled for its Purity and Disinterestedness, and extensive Benefit.—There is no seeing, indeed no thinking of, the miserable Creatures confined there, without melting into Tears at the Sense of their Unhappiness; no reflecting upon the Means used for their Recovery, without rising up and blessing their Benefactors,—O may their Numbers increase daily, till this Noble Foundation is completed by a proper and a lasting Provision for those, whose Distempers are too stubborn for Human Art and Application.

The *London-Workhouse* proves its prodigious Usefulness by its own History; and when one observes how many Thousands,

70 S E R M O N II.

in the Course of a few Years, have been cloathed and educated, and sent into the Public Service, and how many Thousands more restored to it, by the good Care and Discipline of the House, we must own that it bears a very honourable Share in the Charities of this munificent City. And indeed it must be confessed of all these several Institutions, that no Public Charities can be better designed than they are: Religion and Civil Government unite in their Approbation; they plainly answer every End of both; the Good of Society, the Happiness of Individuals, the Advancement of our most holy Religion, and the Glory of our great Creator; so that, if they are as faithfully executed as they are wisely designed, we shall act with great Unthankfulness to the good Governors of them, shew little Warmth or Concern for the Public, or the Success of our Religion, and betray a very criminal Obdurateness to the Wants and Miseries of our Fellow-Creatures; if we deny them our best Help and Assistance.—Who then are they that answer for the right Administration of these excellent Charities?
Their

S E R M O N II. 71

Their Presence forbids me to enlarge upon their Praises, but Justice commands me to observe, that as their Talents for, and Acquaintance with Business, their opulent Fortunes, their natural Attachment and Love to their City and their Country, and to the Interest of their Religion, render them fit for so important a Trust, and set them above every little and private Corruption, so their Behaviour in it has always appeared to be most exact and exemplary; and one Circumstance should always be remembered to their Honour, that far from declining these kind Offices, though attended usually with much Trouble and Expence, they seem ambitious of the Employment; as if it was a Praise and Credit to their Characters, as indeed it is, to *go about doing Good*. But still, it seems, the Supplies of Bounty, tho' managed with most scrupulous Fidelity, are very unequal to the Calls of Want, Misery, and Misfortune.—Now this is a great Reproach to us, not only as Professors of the best and best tempered Religion in the World, but to the Humanity and Good-nature of the *English* People.—Look round

72 S E R M O N II.

about you, observe the Marks of Opulence in this prodigious City, with what expensive Elegance we build, with what Vanity and Curiosity we furnish, with what Pride and Ostentation we are attended, with what a sumptuous Luxury we spread our Tables, and in what Excess and Prodigality we support our Public Diversions, and then sit down and be ashamed to consider, that nothing around us bears the Mark of Penury but our Public Charities:—A very faithful Report of their Condition is here presented to you, and such as, we will hope, may move your compassionate Assistance: For, in the midst of the highest and most luxurious Affluence, it ought not surely to be Matter of annual Complaint, that Houses decay for want of Funds to repair them, that Orphans are left exposed to Poverty and Vice, that the Sick and Wounded are rejected for want of Room to receive them, the Incurables returned upon their distressed and helpless Friends, and even in those Hospitals, which are managed with the nicest and most faithful Oeconomy, the Accommodations are short of what Charity and Good-nature

S E R M O N II. 73

nature could wish them.—How much better would it become the Grandeur of this Christian City, if the Cup overflowed, if the Garners of Charity were full and plenteous with all Manner of Store, so that there should be no Marks of Decay, and no room for complaining in our Streets.—One might mention a World of Arguments to warm your Compassion upon these Occasions. I will suggest one to you, which is not always considered, at least not so much as it seems to me to deserve. It is this, That there is not a clearer Point of natural Justice, nor any thing more for the Interest of Community, than that these particular Charities should be supported and encouraged.—It should never be forgot, That People in higher Life owe all their Ease and Felicity to the Industry and Labours of the Poor: They bring in all the Materials of our worldly Happiness; they trade for us, they fight for us, they build, they furnish, they provide for our Tables, and attend our Commands both in Health and Sickness, at all Times and Seasons both of Business and of Pleasure, and this at the Hazard of their
own

74 S E R M O N II.

own Health and Lives ; and therefore it is not a Point only of *Mercy*, but of *natural Justice*, to take the kindest Care of them and of their Offspring,—a Care which will be amply repaid us : For when they experience our Bounty, I had like to have called it *Gratitude*, upon these Occasions, they will serve us with Heart, and Love, and Faithfulness ; will seek the Peace of the City, where they dwell ; and be naturally Carried, in their several Stations, to promote the common Interest. The Truth is, neither the Peace nor Welfare of the Public can in any degree be preserved without a due Care of the Poor ; and it wants but little Reflection to see, that the Rich, with all the Advantages that their Wealth could give them, would have a very uneasy Time of it, if the Children of the Poor were utterly untaught and ignorant, the Sick and Aged unprovided for, and the idle and vagrant Part of them let loose upon the Sober and Industrious : It is not therefore, as I must observe again to you, only the *Goodness* of Religion, which enjoins us Charity, but it is Part of the *Wisdom* of Civil Govern-

S E R M O N II. 75

Government, and has been the Care of all understanding Legislatures.—An Argument which I will venture to leave with you, as a very important one for Mercy and Good-nature ; which will strike your Minds with a Force not to be resisted, when, in your private and Self-Reflections, you will add to it those still more weighty ones, drawn from the Nature of God, from the plain Injunctions of those Scriptures, which you believe and reverence, and from the most amiable Example of that kind and merciful Saviour, who is to be our common Judge.

A S E R-

S E R M O N I I . 73

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A S E R

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED before the
HOUSE of LORDS,
IN THE
ABBAY-CHURCH of *Westminster*,
ON
WEDNESDAY *January 30, 1739-40.*

Being the Day appointed to be observed as the Day
of the Martyrdom of King CHARLES I.

S. E. R. M. O. N.

Presented before the

House of Lords,

IN THE

Abbey-Church of Westminster,

ON

Wednesday January 30, 1733-40.

Being the Day appointed to be observed as the Day
of the Abolition of King Charles II.

S E R M O N III.

I P E T E R, ii. 13, 14.

*Submit yourselves to every Ordinance
of Man for the Lord's sake, whe-
ther it be to the King, as Su-
preme;*

*Or unto Governors, as unto them that
are sent by him, for the Punish-
ment of Evil Doers, and for the
Praise of them that do well.*

THE different Opinions about Reli-
gion and Government, and the Zeal
of Parties, which have so inflamed us against
one another, ever since the Reign of King
Charles I. have made it a Matter of some
Difficulty to discharge the Duty of this
Day, as having occasioned Abundance of
uncharitable Censures, which have set us at
a still

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a still wider Distance from one another: Yet, since the Legislature have thought this a very proper, tho' perhaps painful Remembrance of our past Evils, the Preacher ought to do his Duty, and, preserving such Equality of Temper in his Reflections and Observations, as does no Injustice to either Side (for in both, Faults were committed in the Heats raised by mutual Provocations), if he cannot escape the Censure of this or that Party, he ought to rest satisfied with the Uprightness of his Intentions.

The Times that preceded the Tragedy of this Day, and ensued upon it, till the Restoration, were Times of great Cruelty and Bloodshed, and of the utmost Confusion and Distraction both in Church and State; and a few Moments of Recollection, after reading that Part of our History, will naturally, almost involuntarily, make us bless God, that we had no Share in those dreadful Sufferings, and rise up in Thanks to his good Providence, which has placed us in such Circumstances, that we may lead our Lives, if it is not our own Fault, in
great

SERMON III. 81

great Security and Happiness: And, when we consider, upon the Comparison, the Blessings of a gentle Government, and a peaceful State of things; if we have any Love for our native Country, a sincere and honest Zeal for our good Religion, or a Sense of the Value of our wise Establishment, it will put us, methinks, upon endeavouring, all we can, to enjoy that Happiness temperately ourselves, and to transmit it safe to our Posterity.—It will suggest, to us peculiarly, the proper Use of this Day's Humiliation, which we shall think, after our more immediate Duty paid to God, in deprecating his just Displeasure, for our own and the Nation's Sins, cannot be better spent, than in enlarging upon the Advantages of a peaceful Government, and considering how feelingly our own History may teach us, that it is the Support of every thing safe and orderly, and beautiful in Society; and that Anarchy and Confusion, such as once reigned in the public Administration of our Affairs, is a greater Evil to Mankind than Plague, or Famine, or open War,—a Dis-

G. stemper

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stemper of greater Malignity, longer Continuance, and of more difficult Cure.

The Teachers of the Christian Religion (with a Wisdom and Goodness not to be equalled by any other) appear to have been very sensible of this, and therefore, together with the best Instructions for every private Man's Happiness, have shewn great Sollicitude for the Public.—Their Advice upon this Head is scattered in, and may be collected from, innumerable places of their Writings; in which, they have only copied from the Instructions, and formed themselves upon the Example of their great Master, who both taught and practised the important Doctrine of a quiet and peaceful Behaviour, as one of the most invaluable Blessings to Men; and for that Reason, doubtless, has made it one of the primary Precepts of his Religion.

Submit yourselves, says St. Peter in the Text, to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's Sake *; i. e. Upon Reasons of Con-

* 1 Pet. ii. 13.

science,

S E R M O N III. 83

science, and plain Duty to God, who is a God of Order, and made you for Society and Government; and that, whether it be to the King, as Supreme;—Remember, that, in the due Discharge of your Duty, your first Reverence and Honour is due to the Person of the Supreme Magistrate, whose Dignity and high Station demand it; and next, in a proper Subordination, to the Governors that are sent by him, the Ears, and Eyes, and Hands of the Supreme Magistrate; by which alone he can hear the Complaints, see the Miscarriages, and provide for the Exigencies of his Subjects; for the Punishment of Evil-Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.—The Public Good is the only End of Government, which chiefly consists in the Practice of distributive Justice, and proportioning Rewards, or Punishments, to the Merits, or Demerits, of Men. This is the Substance of the Apostle's Instruction to Subjects, upon the nice Point of Obedience to Governors; wise and reasonable, and well tempered; not asserting to the Prince a lawless and tyrannical Power, nor indulging to the People

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a loose and unsettled Obedience.—The King, as it ought to be, must be revered and honoured as Supreme, and the Subject must be dutiful and obedient; and both must have it in their Minds, and this will for ever secure their mutual Happiness, That the Institution of Magistracy itself was for the Public Good; for the Punishment of Evil-Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.

Give me Leave then, upon a Point of Doctrine very well adapted to the Business of this Day's Solemnity, and by no means unsuitable to the present Times, to enlarge a little further upon this Advice of St. Peter, by considering,

First, Upon what Reason it is that the Subject is enjoined here, to pay his principal Regard and Reverence to the Person of the first Magistrate. *Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man; and, if you live under a Royal Form of Government, to the King, as Supreme.*

Secondly,

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Secondly, Having fully considered this Head, and shewn the Obligation to the Duty, I will suggest a few things concerning the proper Manner of performing it.

Thirdly, I will then close the Subject with one or two Reflections.

And, *First*, For the Honour due to the Supreme Magistrate, St. *Peter* has made it here a Duty of Christian Religion; as it was, before, the reasonable Service of the Subject, and a matter of the clearest good Policy in the World: For one of the first Considerations to all wise Legislators, in modelling and establishing the several Forms of Government, has been to raise the Seat of Sovereignty above the common Level, to guard it against the Encroachments and Contempt of the Vulgar, and to secure to Magistracy its Preheminency.—This Care is essential to Government, which cannot otherwise be upheld, but by preserving to all Orders and Degrees of Men, their proper Share of Respect and Honour; in which the Supreme Magistrate naturally

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claims the first Place, from the Dignity of his Office; from the Difficulties which attend the Discharge of it; and from its Weight and Importance.

For the Dignity of the Kingly Office, it is, I think, a Speculation more amusing than instructive, to inquire into its first Rise and Origin; and it matters very little to this Age of the World, whether it was coëval to the Parental Authority, or grew out of it; whether it arose from Compact, or from distinguished Merit, or from the Force of Arms, or from the express Appointment of God.—It has arisen perhaps from all these Causes; in different Parts of the World; but the thing most to be observed is, that a Royal Form of Government has generally taken Place; and this general Practice of Men in its Favour is no mean Argument, that it is, when duly limited, the most natural and the wisest Model; of which there can be no Dispute, if the Definition of the Moralist is a right one, ‘ that a Tyrant is
‘ no Magistrate, and that the proper and
‘ essential Character of a King, is to rule his

S E R M O N III. 87

‘ Subjects in the Fear of God, and with a
 ‘ strict Observance of his Country’s Laws : ’
 This, undoubtedly, is the only certain Foundation of the Subject’s Reverence, and no other Claim can possibly support it long ; for it may be said of Kings, as the Philosopher says of the Deity, ‘ that their Wisdom
 ‘ and Goodness is their Majesty.’

There are indeed other lower Considerations, which naturally, and some of them very justly, secure to them a superior Respect and Honour.—The very Right of Commanding necessarily produces it.—The Advantages of an high Birth and Education do the same.—It is in some sort due even to weak and degenerate Princes, on account of the Merit and Memory of Illustrious Ancestors, that have been signal Benefactors to their Country, and it is the very Design and End, as it is the common Effect of that Pomp and outward Shew, with which the Wisdom of the Public has surrounded them.—Add to this, that the King is made the Fountain of Honour, and all the shining Privileges and Distinctions among Men are

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committed to *his* Care and Distribution, as the best Guardian of Virtue, and the most impartial Rewarder of Merit. — All which Circumstances shew how much it was the Intention of Legislators, and how much it is to the Purpose and Support of good Government, that Kings be obeyed and honoured : This Honour is indeed sometimes seen to degenerate into servile Terror, and wicked and blasphemous Adulation, of equal Dishonour both to Prince and People; while the only Respect worth contending for, or of any Benefit to the Public Weal, is the generous Offering of a free and peaceable Subject to the Virtues and high Station of a wise and good King; and it is indeed a very natural Effect, that the Goodness of the Prince, and the Affection and Reverence of the Subject should be reciprocal : It would be so invariably, were it not that bad Ministers have sometimes abused the Confidence of their Principals, or that, in corrupt Times, Faction interrupts this most desirable Intercourse, insinuates base and false Notions of the best of Princes, and, with a Malignity, most baneful to the Public, converts

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verts the Honour, which is due to their true Characters, into a Contempt and Hatred of their false ones; and then it becomes the Duty of the faithful and honest Subject to discountenance these vile Practices, to assert the Dignity of the Prince, the Value of his true Character, and inform the People, that the Harmony of Government is lost, and its very Being endangered, when his Office and Person are contemned and trampled on. In the last Age, after the People had been taught to revile the King's Person and Family, they were brought at last, by the wicked Arts of Incendiaries, to throw aside all Regard and Duty for the Crown: The Peerage fell into Contempt together with it, and the Government was quite subverted; for whilst a Lawless Power had deprived them of their Seats in Parliament, the Refuse of the People forced themselves into the highest Stations; Servants trampled upon the Necks of their Masters, became our Senators, and the Guardians of our Laws.—An Observation from Experience, that strengthens and corroborates Reason, and shews to a Demonstration, that it is not only a Point of Policy, but

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but of Religion too (inseparably connected with the Public Good), that Allegiance and Reverence be paid to Kings. Religion has indeed been often introduced upon this Argument very unwarrantably and corruptly, by dividing the Interest of Prince and People; yet, considered in itself, and as laid down in the Gospel, it gives the greatest Security to both in Conjunction. And, no doubt, the Good of Community is aimed at, when God himself interposes, and binds this Duty on us, speaking, as he does very frequently in the Scriptures, of Kings, as his Deputies and Vicegerents upon the Earth: *For Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another **: By him Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice †; and the same Hand that changeth the Times and the Seasons, removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings ‡. So that, since the Order and Being of good Government is so much interested in this Duty, since the Wisdom of God approves and recommends it, and his Pro-

* Psal. lxxv. 6, 7.

† Prov. viii. 16.

‡ Dan. ii. 21.

vidence

S E R M O N III. 91

vidence appears so far concerned in the Care and Preservation of supreme Magistrates, let us consider all this as a principal Argument of their Dignity, and of the Wisdom of the Apostle's Instruction here, *to submit ourselves to them.*

The Difficulties attending the Discharge of the Kingly Office, will suggest to the Subject another Argument of Honour and Obedience.

Government is, in itself, a very arduous Employment; and whoever will consider coolly the infinite Variety of Tempers and Constitutions of Men, their Passions, their Follies, their Capriciousness, their different, and oftentimes contradictory Views and Interests, all which must be pointed to the Preservation of the Public, at least restrained so, as not to hurt it, will think it nothing less than a Miracle, that it is supported at all; and the Subsistence of it is, in truth, a standing and incontestible Proof of the Care and Providence of God over the Affairs of Men.

In

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In common Reflection, the Magistrate bears all the Blame, when things are ill administered ; when a very little Insight into the World will shew us, that, let the Prince be of the most honest and upright Intentions, of the wisest Foresight and most consummate Experience, make the best Laws, and execute them with the most faithful Impartiality, all will be insufficient to support the Interest and Honour of his Government, if the Subject does not concur and assist him, by maintaining the Dignity and Authority of his Office.

Some Writers upon Government, and those esteemed by many as Men of the highest Penetration, have laid it down as a Maxim, that Honesty, or Integrity of Heart, is a very incompetent, if not hurtful Qualification in a great Prince ; and that the World is not to be governed but by a Prostitution of all good Morals to the Views and Interests of State, and to the Follies and Prejudices of Men.—One would hope, for the Honour of Human Nature, that this is false ; it is undoubtedly a most wicked and
licen-

S E R M O N III. 93

licentious Principle, and fit only for the Ears of a Tyrant: But, if admitted, it carries with it a severer Reflection upon the People than the Prince, and this useful Instruction very plainly, that, since one main Motive to Wickedness and Tyranny in Princes is the Folly and Perverseness of the People, they are bound from Reasons of their own Preservation, to lighten the Burthen, and lessen the Difficulties of Government; to support the Character and Honour of their Prince, and, instead of aggravating and exposing every little Miscarriage that they see, or think they see, in his Administration, to cover and excuse them;—more especially, when the main Points of Government are safe; and it appears, in the general Tenour of his Conduct, that his Heart and Intentions are for the Public Good.

For the same Reason there is a proper Apology due for some personal Imperfections; for, if Princes were without them, they were indeed the *Gods*, which Folly has too often styled them; but they are *Men*; and it should be considered, that they live
sur-

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furrounded with Temptations, and some of a kind, to which only their Station is exposed; and very unequal were their Lot, if they had not the same Title to Charity and good Nature from others, that Men, from Reasons of Religion, of Humanity, and a certain Nobleness of Heart, exercise to each other in their common Intercourse.—It were exceeding hard, if the Characters of Princes were the only ones, in which we were indulged the cruel Excess of marking every thing which is done amiss.

The two Extremes, which are the Ruin of Government, are the Tyranny of Princes, and the Licentiousness of the People: The latter occurs in the History of Mankind, as well as the former; and, when that is observed to be the fatal Tendency of the Nation, one very natural and obvious Cure of the Evil, is to shew in our own Behaviour, and to promote in others, a just Reverence of the King.—A Care, incumbent on us, not so much for *his* sake, as *our own*; because, when once the Vulgar are taught to set at nought that high Distinction, they will
pay

S E R M O N III. 95

pay little Regard to all inferior ones; the Parent, the Magistrate, and Men of all Ranks and Stations, will suffer in the general Licence; there will be an End of all Order and Decorum, and, in a little Time, of the Society itself.

And this will suggest to us another Argument of the Reverence due to the Supreme Magistrate, from the Weight and Importance of his Character. It is not easy to say, how much the Public is concerned in the Preservation of *his* Life and Honour;—every base Attempt to hurt the one, or to discredit the other, is highly criminal, and may be considered as a Sort of Treason against the Society he governs; for though the Person of the King seems immediately to suffer, the Mischief is most felt by the People. From the Height of his Estate, the Extent of his Power, and the Trust necessarily reposed in him, there arises an inseparable Connection between the Health, the Honour, the Prosperity of the King, and that of the Community he presides over; a thing so easily understood and sensibly felt, that,
in

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in a right and sober Sense, he may be styled the Life and Soul of it; the Spirit, which, in a great measure, quickens and actuates the Body Politic: By the Life of a good Prince there is necessarily preserved Quiet and Order, and a certain regular Stability of things, which, by a change of Affairs, are often put into a confused and fluctuating Motion, and are not settled again without great Difficulty and Hazard.

In like manner, while his Honour and Authority are maintained, the Credit of the Public is kept up with it; which, besides Peace and Tranquility at Home, is matter of Glory and Reputation to a People Abroad, and of the greatest Weight in a thousand Instances of the most nice and momentous Concern; such as settling Trade, securing National Rights, and adjusting the Claims and Interests of jarring Parties; by which, things are kept quiet Abroad, and an infinite Expence of Blood and Treasure prevented; the Weight of a Nation being very much in proportion to the Credit and Character of the Prince and Head, its Representative.

It

S E R M O N III. 97

It is said by a Writer of the first Distinction, ' As the chief Grace and Beauty of a Body is in the Head, and the fairest Ornaments of the whole are placed there, so is any Commonwealth most dignified and beautified by the Reputation of the Prince.'

So again for the Wealth and Revenue of the Crown, nothing is more for the Dignity and Influence of a Nation than this.

In all Governments, Accidents will happen very difficult to be opposed ; and, as where the Treasure of a Prince has been lavished away, so likewise where there is not a sufficient Fund to supply the Wants of the Crown, the Wheels of Government move slowly and heavily ; and the Loss of Time and Opportunities, Irresolution and continual Delays, which, in all great Affairs, are of the utmost Importance to be guarded against, will always be the Result, where the Public Revenues are low and scanty, and disproportioned to the Exigences of the State ; whereas nothing gives a greater Life, and Spirit, and Weight, to the Prince's Character,

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racter, than where the People are free to give, and the Prince liberal to supply every urgent Occasion, where the Honour of his Crown, or the Safety of the Kingdom, is concerned: Holding in his Hand, as to particular Objects, where the giving would answer no wise End, that he may better extend his Goodness to the whole Body of his Subjects; who, as they ought to be his chief Favourites, best deserve to enjoy the Fruits of his Liberality. It is observed of the *English* People, that they are always ready to give freely to their Princes, more than absolute Power could extort from them, when they are satisfied, that the Supplies they give, will return in Blessings to themselves, in providing (which is the proper Use of Public Treasure, and of a King's Revenue), for their Peace and Happiness at Home, and their Security Abroad.—But not only in our own, but in every other Country, the Prosperity of a Prince, attended with this good Correspondence between himself and his People, diffuses a general Chearfulness and Serenity around him, and, like the Sun, to which *Solomon* com-

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prepares him sitting in the Throne of Justice, by a wise and successful Administration, *He scattereth away all Evil with his Eyes* *.

In like manner, for the Power of a King,—It is of the utmost Consequence, that this be properly supported. It is not indeed in all Nations the same: Different People have imparted different Degrees of it, according to their Wisdom and Experience; or, whatever was the Foundation of it, the Fact is not to be disputed, that in every Nation, the Power of the Sovereign is of different Extent: But, whatever it is, and in whatever manner it is balanced, till the Powers which fixed it, alter it, such it ought sacredly and inviolably to be kept, guarded with the exactest Care, against all petulant and disrespectful Treatment, and from every Approach to Faction and Disobedience.—The King is the Father of his People; and the Duty of the Subjects, like the Filial, should be made up of Reverence and Fear;—and no Family, whether public or private, can be well governed, where the Parental Authority has lost its Influence.

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Such is the Importance of the King's Character and Authority, and so just St. *Peter's* Instruction, That ' We submit ourselves ' to him as Supreme.'

It follows, with the most natural Connection in the Apostle's Precept; *Or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the Punishment of Evil-Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well**. A Duty in the Subject of such clear and unquestioned Necessity, that it were to affront Men's Understandings to go about to prove it. The Influence of Magistracy has been in some measure supported in the worst of Times, and even in those we now commemorate; the Confusion, bad as it was, had been infinitely worse, if the very Men, who destroyed the Establishment, had not in some other Method provided this Sort of Security to Peace and Property. The Fountain of all subordinate Magistracy was removed in a most cruel and unexampled Manner: But one of the first Cares of the Usurper, when settled in his Lawless Power, was to supply this fatal De-

* 2 Pet. ii. 10.

ficiency,

S E R M O N III. 101

ficiency, and fix the Seat of Justice; and though there was no King in *Israel*, it was absolutely necessary to send out Governors to some Purposes for the Punishment of Evil-Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well. He was sensible, no doubt, that it would have been an intolerable Aggravation of the Misfortunes which he had brought upon the Nation, if he had suffered it to want Magistrates: He was sensible, indeed, that he could not support himself and his own Power without them; for when once a People have lost all Reverence for Magistracy, naturally speaking, there is no other Bond can hold Community together: The Power of Magistracy, it must be owned, is liable to great Abuses; but it should be considered, that what is sometimes censured as ill Administration in not doing what is fit to be done, in not rewarding Virtue and punishing Vice according to Men's Deservings, may rather perhaps be owing to Want of Power, than an Abuse of it.—The best Things are capable of producing the worst Mischief, but yet the general Good

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depends

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depends upon it, That Magistrates, in their proper Place and Subordination, be obeyed, respected, and assisted; and, even in some Cases of appearing Hardship, there is a peaceful and submissive and yielding Behaviour, which is not only becoming, but necessary in the People. When St. *Peter* gave out the Instruction in the Text, the inferior Governors, I doubt, were very much of the Complexion and Temper of the Emperors, and too often the Instruments of their Passion and Cruelty, sent out upon very different Errands, from what the Apostle charitably supposes. — But he speaks, not so much of the Magistrates of those Times, as of the Foundation of Magistracy itself; and his Intention was not to give us a Precept, suited to particular Seasons, but what might be of general Use and Observation; For this, doubtless, is the Constitution of all good Government; the first Respect is due to the Sovereign Power, and the next to those, in their several Classes, that are delegated from him, for the great Purposes of Peace and Order.

It

It is a sad Prognostic of impending Ruin to a Nation, when the People run into a Contempt of Government, and become impatient under lawful Dominion: And Liberty, which, rightly used, is the most excellent Privilege of our Nature, is abused into Licentiousness, when it is not afraid 'to speak Evil of Dignities, and talks boldly 'of reducing all Orders of Men to a common Level; a State of Things, that may please the Pride of Men in Speculation, but was never designed by Providence, nor can be put in Practice, consistently with Public Good.

Having thus explained the Duty of Submission to Government in general, I am next to suggest a few Particulars, as to the Manner of fulfilling it.

And here, I presume, I need not use many Words.—In one thing at least People seem sufficiently informed, and that is, what is not meant by Submission to Governors; for every one seems to carry about with him Arguments enough to fence against

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a blind and passive and implicit Obedience; and indeed, whatever may be plausibly brought to defend such Obedience, Human Nature will not bear it; and its greatest Advocates have given Proof enough of this in difficult and trying Times.

We now enjoy the Happiness of living under a Prince, who never affected arbitrary Power, or required any other than legal Obedience from his Subjects.—It is then a very natural, and surely a very modest Question to ask: Has he not from thence, does not the Justice of his Government and the Goodness of his Disposition give him, a fairer Claim to all equal and reasonable Submission? That is a Point in which Instruction may be very useful; for it is to be feared, that, while we have been guarding against a blind Obedience, there are those who have almost lost all Notion of one that is just and necessary.—To speak the plain Truth without Disguise, some have run into the licentious Extreme, and, instead of obeying, have taken upon them to censure and calumniate their Governors.

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It is unquestionably true, every one who understands the Nature and End of Government, must own it, that the Duty of Prince and People is reciprocal; it is the Part of the one to support and encourage true Religion, to resolve wisely and maturely, to execute vigorously and steadily, to be true to his Promise, to advance the Interest of his Subjects, and guard their Security, to help his Friends, be a Terror to his Enemies, to be good and bountiful, to temper the Severity of Justice with the Mildness of a proper Mercy, and preserve an impartial Equality in the Execution of his Country's Laws: This, I say, is unquestionably the Part of a good Prince, and every good Prince sees it.-- But then, I beseech you, let us consider, what is the Duty of a Subject: Is it not, from the clearest Reason and Policy in the World, and by the strongest Injunctions of Religion, to honour the King, to pay the proper Duty and Deference to his high Character, to which he has been raised by the Order of Government, by the regular Claim of Royal Birth-right, and by the Sanction of God's Providence? Is it not to vindicate
his

his Name and Family, against the bold Slanders, or insinuating Calumnies of Faction? Is it not to do Justice to, and praise his Virtues? Is it not to pay a strict Obedience to his Laws and Orders, issued for the Public Good? Is it not to raise his Credit and Influence at Home, to give Strength and Authority to his Negotiations Abroad?—Without this Care in the Subjects, the best Designs of the best of Princes will be ineffectual, his Counsels will be confounded, his Hands weakened, and he will find himself in the unhappy Situation of being censured as a bad Governor, when the Passions and Perverseness of his Subjects are the main Foundation of their Discontents.

If there should at any time arise a general Malignity of Disposition, and Faction should corrupt the Hearts, and turn the Heads of the People, the Public would be undone, though one of *Plato's* Kings held the Reins of Government.

The *Spartans*, by their strict Observance of *Lycurgus's* Laws, were, for several Ages, the most flourishing People of all Greece;
and

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and when it was said of them, that their Public Happiness was owing to their Kings being well skilled in the Art of Government, there was Wisdom and Truth in the Answer, which Antiquity records, That it was rather to be imputed to the Disposition of the People, who knew how to obey.

It is undoubtedly, from a Sense of these Difficulties in Government, and how hard a Matter it is to conduct the Affairs of the World, amidst the infinite Jarrings and Perplexities, from the Interests and Passions and Vices of Men, that the Apostle, after having inculcated every Argument of Obedience to Princes, and explained it by the several Injunctions of Love and Honour to their Persons, and Submission to their Laws, closes his Advice, by referring the whole to the wise Providence of God, exhorting the Subject, as the first Instance, and last Effort of his Duty, *That Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, be made for all Men, for Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty;*
 assuring

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assuring us, *that this is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour* *.

The Time now calls upon me to pass on to the last Part of my Design, which was to close the Subject with some Reflections; they will not be the worse, I hope, for being plain and obvious, and grounded chiefly upon this Consideration, that, from the Importance of the Apostle's Precept, we should be led to a very serious and honest Practice of it.

Had this good Rule of Christian and peaceful Behaviour, of which you have heard so much, been better attended to, the History of our Country had appeared in a fairer and clearer Light, unfullied with those dark Times of Confusion, the bad Effects of which are, in some Degree, felt by us to this very Day; and therefore the best Use that we can make of the painful Commemoration of these past Evils, is to recommend such wise and well-governed Behaviour, as may prevent the like for the Time to come:

* 1 Tim. ii, 1, 2, 3.

For,

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For, after all, our chief Concern is for the present and the future, and it is extremely well for us, if we can grow wise upon the Experience of our Forefathers, and learn the Value of Peace, without the Expence of War and Bloodshed.

The distinct History of those Times and People, the Circumstances of Action, the Motives upon which they proceeded, the Manner and Temper of their Conduct, the Necessity or Prudence of what they did, are Things, in which it is very hard to come at a clear Certainty, and therefore as hard, if not impossible, to form a right Judgment about them; and to proceed only upon Conjecture, is to give Occasion to perpetual and fretful Contentions.

The great Matters of Fact are very plain and legible. In the State, through the corrupt Views of evil Ministers, and their flattering Practices upon a young well meaning Prince, arbitrary Power was taking large Strides to establish itself; an Opposition to which was all that was probably first intended

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tended by those wise and distinguished Men in the Nation, who stepped in to give a Check to it, and preserve the Regal Power within its proper Bounds. In the Church, the Petulancy of popular Preachers, who, under the Cloke of Purity and Holiness, were continually undermining the Ecclesiastical Government, drew upon them a most heavy Prosecution; in the Course of which it must be confessed, great Insolences were indeed committed in the Wantonness of Power, and most unwarrantable Hardships exercised upon those who differed from it; which, in the Judgment of cool and considerate Men, were utterly unjustifiable, both in point of Prudence and Christianity.—But the Unhappiness to us was, that the Remedy of these Evils, carried into Excess, proved worse than the Disease; Anarchy, and its natural Offspring, Tyranny, took Possession of the State; and in the Church, whether from a sad Spirit of Revenge, from Religion ill understood, or from the Heats of Enthusiasm, the Hardships practised under the old Establishment were infinitely surpassed, by the Severity of the Discipline which succeeded it.

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it.—But a little of these Reflections is perhaps too much, and it would ill become the Place I stand in, to throw out any that have the least Tincture of Passion or Emotion; they would be so much the worse, and more unjustifiable, as the Truth is, that the Mischiefs to the Public (whatever might be the Cause in the Progress of those dreadful Evils) did not arise so much from any one Set of Men, as from a general Misbehaviour and want of Temper in all: For if the Remonstrances of the sober and moderate Men in each Party (in each Party some were found) had been attended to, the Dignity of the Crown, the Life of the King, the invaluable Rights of the Subject, and the established Form of Government, both in Church and State, had been all supported and secured:—But the Watchfulness of our common Enemy, always at hand to take Advantage of our Discords, the private Views of Interest and Ambition, Pride, and giddy Inconsiderateness, the seeming confused Workings of second Causes (which are indeed the fixed Operations of Providence, to
con-

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confound and punish evil and distempered Nations) and a furious and ungoverned Zeal, which, with a peculiar Malignity, can turn even Religion (the Beauty and Perfection of our Nature) into the most deadly and corroding Mischief;—all together prevented the Effects of every peaceful Scheme, and the still Voice of Reason or Religion could no longer be heard in the Fury of Sedition, and the Noise of Arms.—And what, I would ask, is the natural Instruction then that occurs to every impartial Reader of this Part of our History? I need not intimate that it is, from a View of these sad Consequences, to guard against the Beginnings of Sedition, and in all inferior Differences, nay even in all our Attempts to secure our Rights and Liberties, to preserve a just Respect and Reverence for the King, and for our established Government; and to cultivate, in our several Stations, that Peace and Moderation of Temper, which, under the Conduct of a wise and reasonable Liberty, is the most valuable Thing in Nature: Without this Care in our Behaviour, Grievances from bad Govern-

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Government may be shifted, may be aggravated, as this Day testifies, but never can be redressed.

It has pleased God (for ever blessed be his Providence) to place us in a very happy Situation, in which we may be preserved for ever by practising one plain and easy Rule, which is, *To be quiet, and to mind our own Business* *.—Our Government, we experience, is placed upon its proper Basis (not to be shaken by any thing, but our Passions and Party Resentments) and the several Powers of which it is composed, balanced perhaps as perfectly as human Affairs will admit; and our established Church, supported by a Prince of unquestioned Zeal for the Protestant Religion, without the Spirit of Persecution; not by any Oppression of Mens Consciences, which has disturbed the Peace of so many former Reigns, but by such a wise and well-ordered Scheme of Government, as shews the tenderest Regard for the Rights of all his Subjects; So that what our Forefathers were so long, and so

* 1 Thes. iv. 11.

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sharply, contending for in the Field, we, their Posterity, may enjoy in Peace, *viz.* That excellent Form of Government, both in Church and State, which is secured from Tyranny on one hand, and from Licentiousness on the other.

We have seen what fatal Mischiefs, what Ruin and Devastation were brought upon this Kingdom by a Spirit of Faction and Discontent, kept up, when all just Grievances might have been redressed, and the Rights of the Subject secured, nay, even enlarged: And all this happening to us at a Time, when we had no foreign Enemy to invade us;—a fortunate Circumstance for us at that Juncture! For this Nation is too great and powerful to suffer any Distresses, or fear any Impressions from foreign Force at any other Time, but that of Civil Wars and Dissentions.—But there are innumerable Instances in History, which, as well as our own Experience, may convince us, that States, which never feared any foreign Danger, may be ruined by their own Divisions.—Our Enemies have been sensible of this, and there-

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therefore their Policy has always been to widen our Breaches and inflame our Discontents, and to turn the Force of those Arms against ourselves, which they had often experienced to be invincible against our common Enemy. And if ever it was the Interest of any People to look to themselves, and lay aside their Quarrels with one another for the public and general Safety (in which every Party, and every private Man is involved; for we are all embarked in the same Bottom, and must share the same Fortune;) we ought to do it at this critical Season, when Pretensions are formed upon us, which, if submitted to, must end in the Loss of our most valuable Rights, essential not only to the Prosperity of our Trade, but the very Security of our Government, and when we are already engaged in a War with one great Power.

These Things coolly considered, in all Reason and Prudence, should bring us to a better Understanding with one another, and to that firm and unshaken Unanimity, which

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will make us considered and feared by all around us.

There has indeed lately appeared a very remarkable Union of all Hearts and Hands against the present Danger that threatens us, and it is to be hoped that we may congratulate ourselves upon it, as the Beginning of a general and lasting Unanimity: But, after all, if Men united upon this, resolve, upon every other Occasion, to keep up Animosities and Party-Divisions, the common Interest of our Country will suffer grievously, and we shall carry on even this just, this necessary War, on great Inequality of Terms; we shall employ Weakness against Strength, and Infatuation against Policy; so that, humanly speaking, sooner or later a Gap will be opened for our Enemies to enter in, and perhaps take Possession, not through any superior Valour of theirs, but want of Union among ourselves.

This was the Case of our Ancestors at the Time of the *Roman*, and *Saxon*, and *Nor-*

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man Invasions (Periods in our History, full of Instruction to a divided Nation), and God grant that never the like Calamity may befall us, or any of our Posterity;—we certainly have it in our Power to prevent it: For while *Great Britain* is in Union at Home, lives in Obedience to her Laws and Government, and in the conscientious Practice of the true Protestant Religion, the Providence of God, the Situation of her Islands, and the Genius and Spirit of her Country, as they often have preserved, so always will preserve her.

S E R M O N III

and Inventions (Persons in our History, full
of Invention to a divided Union), and
God grant that never the like Christianity may
betake us, or any of our Posterity;—
I have here it is our duty to guard
For while God is in us, we are in him, and
I have here it is our duty to guard
Government, and in the conduct of the
the of the two Powers, which in the
vidence of God, the Union of the
and the Government, and the
as they often have proved, is a will
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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED before the

S O C I E T Y

Corresponding with the

INCORPORATED SOCIETY in *Dublin*,
for promoting *English* Protestant Work-
ing Schools in *Ireland*,

A T T H E I R

Anniversary Meeting in the Parish-Church of
St. Mary le Bow, on *Wednesday, March 18*,
1740-41.

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

S O C I E T Y

Corresponding with the

INCORPORATED SOCIETY in Dublin
for promoting English Protestant Work-
ing Schools in Ireland.

AT THE

Anniversary Meeting in the Parish Church of
St. Mary is held on Wednesday, June 12,

1740-41.

S E R M O N IV.

LUKE, x. 36, 37.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was Neighbour unto him that fell among the Thieves?

And he said, He that shewed Mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

THESE Words are the Conclusion of an excellent Parable of our Saviour's, the several Circumstances of which are very well known; and as they are extremely touching, and adapted to the natural Sentiments of Men, will afford us sufficient Matter for our present Observation: But, for the clearer understanding, and putting them in a more striking Point of View, it will be necessary to premise somewhat concerning the Design and Occasion of the Parable.

Now

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Now the Occasion of it was this: A certain Lawyer of the *Jews* hearing that our Saviour professed to teach the Way to eternal Life, applies himself to him, with the important Question, what he should do to obtain it: But this he did, as it seems, more out of Curiosity, or a captious Design to entrap him in his Answer, than in a serious and ingenuous Desire to be instructed; for he was in hopes that, if his Answer had contained any thing contrary to the Law of *Moses*, he should have had sufficient Ground of Accusation against him. But our Saviour defeated his malicious Intentions, by sending him to the Law of *Moses* for his Answer; *For he said unto him, What is written in the Law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and with all thy Mind; and thy Neighbour as thyself. And our Saviour said unto him, Thou hast answered right: This do, and thou shalt live*. But the Lawyer, willing to justify himself, in a sufficient Confidence of his legal Upright-*

* Luke x. 26, 27, 28.

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ness, and little doubting, it is likely, but that our Saviour's Answer would be agreeable to, and confirm his Practice, asks farther, *Who is my Neighbour?* How far the Meaning of that Word extends? Whether, according to the *Jewish* Notion, it is to be confined within their own Kindred, or Nation, or Religion; or whether, in a larger Signification (which the Lawyer, it is probable, little expected was the true one) it comprehends a general and undistinguished Regard for the Good of all Men. Now it was the Design of our Saviour to convince the *Jews*, that this last was the real Meaning of the Precept; and that the narrow and confined Notion of theirs, that none was their Neighbour who was not of their Name, or Nation, was contrary to all Reason and Humanity, and never intended by the Law of *Moses*; being a false, and very injurious, Interpretation of their Doctors. This, I think, was the Design of the Parable, to cure the *Jews* of their mean and ungenerous Notions; which were not the Precept of their Law, but the insincere and wicked Interpretation of their Teachers,
who,

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who, as it happened, had made shift to *render the Commandment of God of none Effect**; and, instead of a generous and good-natured Principle, which was to be the Foundation of universal Love and Charity amongst Men, had imposed upon the deluded People one that was base and servile and contracted only within themselves. But, however mean and selfish this Principle was, by working upon their Ignorance and superstitious Bigotry, their Teachers had rooted it so deeply in their Minds, that it required great Address and Skill to inspire them with better Sentiments. In our Saviour's Time they appear to have been wonderfully tenacious of it, and to have contracted from thence (as it was natural enough) a very high and arrogant Opinion of themselves, and a perfect Contempt and Abhorrence of all the World besides; insomuch that they looked upon it rather as an Offence against their Law to do the common Offices of Humanity, or even to converse upon the foot of common Civility, with an Heathen or a Stranger. It will be thought, therefore, a very necessary Undertaking in our Saviour (whose Reli-

* Matt. xv. 6.

S E R M O N IV. 125

gion was to be quite of another Spirit, being intended for the common and universal Good of Man, *Gentile* as well as *Jew*) to endeavour to divest the Minds of those whom he came to instruct, of such low and abject Notions; and that the Question which the Lawyer here propounds to him, was a very fair Opportunity for him to set about it. The Use therefore which our Saviour makes of this Opportunity, shall be the Subject of the ensuing Discourse; which Use will be best explained to you by making some few distinct and very obvious Observations, upon the several Circumstances of this admirable Parable.

But first we would observe to you, the divine Prudence of our Saviour in answering this invidious Question by the way of Parable; for this, as it appears by the Event, was the best Method of correcting the Error, without incurring the Anger and Odium of the *Jews* for attempting it.

The Lawyer here, who, as from his Character we may presume, had as much Passion and Prejudice against our Saviour and
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his Doctrine, as any of his Countrymen, is to be convinced of a Mistake, which probably he had imbibed from his Youth, and which he had always been taught to esteem and reverence as a Principle of Religion, which had the Sanction and Authority of *Moses*: So that there was need of great Prudence and Skill in the Application to convince him of an Error, so deeply rooted by Time and Education, without offending him. Had our Saviour fallen directly upon the Matter, and answered the Question plainly, without at all considering the Weakness and great Prejudice of the Proposer—Had he told him, for instance, that the *Jews*, by too much contracting the Precept of loving their Neighbour, had in reality destroyed it; and by excluding all from being Objects of their Friendship, who were not of their Nation, had acted contrary to all the Notions of common Reason and Humanity—Had he told him, that this their Error was falsely and injuriously charged upon their Lawgiver; that the true Foundation of it was the Baseness and Corruption of the Pharisees and Lawyers, and that it had been main-

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maintained and supported by their own intolerable Pride and Arrogance ; and that therefore it was time to quit themselves of a false and wicked Notion, which owed its Birth and Original to the Insincerity of their Teachers, and had grown up ever since under their own blind Prejudices and Passions-- I say, had our Saviour fallen thus plainly upon the Matter, and endeavoured to amend the Error by such a severe Reproof, it is probable that the Roughness of the Answer had given such Distaste to this Enquirer, that, though he might have attended to him in an angry Silence, and been, in the End, convinced of his Mistake, yet he never would have made a fair and ingenuous Acknowledgement that he was so. Now this was what our Saviour aimed at ; but, as he only designed the Good and Benefit of this Enquirer, and, in him, of all the *Jews*, he took Care to effect it in the most acceptable Manner that he could, by accommodating himself to the Weakness and Perverseness of his Temper. He wanted to convince him of his Error ; but, instead of attempting it by a severe and upbraiding Reproof,

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he chose to do it in a mild insinuating Manner, and to gain his Point by artificial, soft Approaches. He was warmly sensible, no doubt, that this Mistake of the *Jews* was a very pernicious Mistake, most destructive of common Charity and Benevolence, most opposite to human Nature, to true Religion, and to the good and beneficent Spirit of his Gospel; but yet it was necessary to temper Zeal with Discretion; and since the *Jews* would not bear a plain and open Reproof from him, he must convey his Precepts to them in Parable, and force them by an honest Stratagem to condemn themselves. To this Purpose therefore he sets before them the Parable of the *Samaritan*; or, as *Grotius* thinks, relates a real Matter of Fact which had happened in a Road much infested by Robbers; in which he draws a most engaging Picture of a generous, good-natured Man, who, free from any little and selfish Views, does not deny his Assistance, in his Distress, to a Stranger, or an Enemy; and then leaves it to themselves to make the Application, to consider whether they can in their Hearts condemn such Braveness and

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Generosity of Temper: And if they cannot, then to reflect how ill that mean and slavish Principle, to which they were so unhappily devoted, would suit with such a Temper. But to the Parable itself, in which it is worth our Notice,

First, That our Saviour puts the Case, for their Instruction, of the most miserable and calamitous Object that he could: It is that of an unfortunate Man, who, as he was travelling from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, fell among Thieves; who, not content with spoiling him of every thing that was valuable, stripped him at last of his very Raiment; and to complete their barbarous Outrage, wounded him, and left him half-dead upon the Place.—This was the extreme Distress of this poor Man: And our Saviour seems purposely to have drawn it in this very affecting Manner, that he might inspire the *Jews* with the stronger Abhorrence of that vile Principle, which could so far change the natural Tempers of Men, as to make them void of Compassion towards an Object so completely miserable: For if

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any thing could have extorted Compassion and Assistance from them, the Object before them would. A Case could hardly be imagined more distressful: And if their Notions were such as could steel their Hearts, and shut up their Bowels of Compassion, when so much Misery called for their Relief, there needed no other Arguments to expose their Baseness and Inhumanity. For those Principles must certainly be naught (let them come never so solemnly recommended under the Notion of Religion), which tend to extinguish in the Minds of Men the Seeds of Humanity, and to blot out their natural Propensions to Charity and Compassion. So that our Saviour, you see, very artificially sets this Case before them, when he had determined to give them true and generous Sentiments of Beneficence and Goodness—A Case of no common Misfortune; that he might, in the Beginning, prepossess their Minds in favour of his Doctrine, shew them their own Deformity in its strongest Colours, and lay them under a Necessity of acknowledging, in the Application, that whoever afforded Relief to this distressed Person, whatever

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whatever were his Nation and Religion, was indeed his Friend, and did perform the Office of a Neighbour to him.

The next thing worth our Remark is this, that our Saviour represents a Priest and a Levite, as both of them passing by, and purposely avoiding the miserable Object that lay before them; for thus he goes on: *By chance there came down a certain Priest that Way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other Side: And likewise a Levite, when he was at the Place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other Side* *. By which our Saviour would intimate to them, that, notwithstanding their boasted Principle of loving their Neighbour, as commanded by the Law of *Moses*, they were very defective in it, even according to their own narrow Interpretation:—That there was more of Pretence among them, than of a real and sincere Affection to one another; and tho' there was a mighty Veneration expressed for *Moses's* Precept in their Words, there was but very little of it in their Actions: For could

* Luke x. 31, 32.

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there be a greater Demonstration of that, than to disregard a Brother, and to leave him quite destitute and forsaken in such terrible Distress? Or, could they have the least Spark of Love and Affection to their Neighbour, or even of common Humanity in them, who could with such a cruel Indifference leave a miserable Wretch half-dead upon the Road? And, to intimate farther, that this Want of Charity was not the Effect of Ignorance, or the Inhumanity only of some few vile and abandoned Creatures, but had in its general Infection corrupted the very best Orders of Men amongst them, he represents a Priest, as forgetful of his necessary Duty, whose Place and Office call for a more than ordinary Degree of Holiness and Charity; and a Levite too, as unmoved on the same Occasion, by all the Ties of Tribe, of Profession, of Religion. Now, it is probable, these Persons might excuse this their Neglect by some such Pretences as these;—That the Place where the wounded Traveller lay might be full of Danger to themselves, and it might seem inconsistent with their own Lives, or Safety,

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to relieve him ; or, that they were upon an hasty Journey to *Jerusalem*, to perform the ministerial Function (as it is an easy matter to find Excuses for the Neglect of a Duty which we have no Inclination to perform) : But had they been acted by a real Spirit of Love and Charity, they would, like the *Samaritan*, have despised the Danger, and might easily have excused their too late Appearance at *Jerusalem*, by the Authority of Him, who, in such Cases as these, had determined the doubting Conscience, by declaring, *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice* *. So that, notwithstanding their affected Reverence for *Moses's* Precept, even in their own Sense of it, it had almost lost its Force and Influence among them : For, we must believe, that there was a very small degree of mutual Love and Affection among a People, where there was Occasion for so severe a Reprehension, as is strongly implied in this Observation of our Saviour. It seems, Matters were come to such a sad pass amongst them, and the Meaning of their excellent Law was so little attended to, that the Life

* Mat. ix. 13.

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of it was quite gone, and there remained only the Shadow (and hardly that) of Charity and common good Nature: For even the Priest and Levite here (of whom we might have expected better things), when they came to the Place where this unhappy Traveller lay, stripped of his Raiment, and wounded, and half-dead, only *looked on him, and passed by on the other Side.*—They gave him a transient Look, out of a vulgar and unaffected Curiosity; might perhaps lend him a pitying Eye, and a compassionate Wish; but their vile Selfishness and stupid Indifference prevented their lending him an assisting Hand.—Strange Corruption of human Nature! That an excellent Precept, given by God himself, to maintain and keep alive mutual Affection and Benevolence among Men, should prove the very Means of stifling it; and the Effect of God's commanding his People to love their Neighbours as themselves, should be, first, confining it absurdly to their own Kindred and Nation; and at last, in their Practice, denying it even there.

Another

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Another Circumstance observable in the Parable, and which shews the admirable Prudence of our Saviour, is his making use of the Person of a *Samaritan* on this occasion, to relieve the wounded Man. For though the Priest and the Levite only looked on him, and passed by on the other Side, yet the Parable tells us, that *a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: And when he saw him, he had Compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his Wounds, pouring in Oil and Wine* *.—Now this, I think, shews the admirable Prudence of our Saviour: It was his main Scope and Intent, in this Parable, to explain the Meaning of loving our Neighbour in its full Latitude and Extent, and to convince the *Jews*, that it was not calculated for their Use only, but for the Good and Benefit of Men in general. If therefore he could once bring them to acknowledge, That the *Samaritans* themselves were Objects of their Love and Mercy, and comprehended within the Meaning of the Precept, there would be no difficulty in their admitting all the World besides into

* Luke x. 33, 34.

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the same Share of their Regard: For the *Samaritans* were an Abomination to the *Jews*; and there was a deadly and irreconcilable Hatred betwixt them. But now, in the Case before them, Love and Regard for their own Countryman would force them to acknowledge, That the *Samaritan* did a very commendable Act of Charity in assisting him, though a *Jew*, though a Stranger, though an Enemy, to their Name and Nation.—But had our Saviour put the Case in other Terms; had the wounded Man been the *Samaritan*, and the distressed *Jew* in the Case of the compassionate Reliever; it is possible that the Lawyer, upon the Question, instead of owning that he had done the Office of a Friend and Neighbour, might have condemned him of a very foolish Officiousness, and an unmanly Weakness of Temper, which had betrayed him into an Action so unbecoming his Name and Character, as to assist a *Samaritan*, an Enemy, a vile unclean Person, and a Stranger to their Law and Religion.—Our Saviour, therefore, obviates this Objection very wisely, by circumstantiating the Story so, that the
Lawyer

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Lawyer (in Concern for his Countryman) was under a Necessity of owning, that the Office of this Stranger to the *Jew*, was an exceeding kind good-natured Office. And if so, then let himself ask the Question seriously, Whether the Application be not very natural, and the Consequence extremely just, that if the *Samaritan* did well in assisting the *Jew*, the *Jew*, under the same Circumstances, would not have acted as commendably in relieving an unfortunate *Samaritan*.—The Question will admit of no other Answer but the right one. For what the *Samaritan* did was in Obedience to the Law of Nature, and out of a Sense of the common Obligations of Humanity, which was a general everlasting Law, not to be cancelled by any positive Institutions whatsoever, much less was it to be superseded and made of none Effect, by a false and absurd Interpretation of a Law, which did in truth enjoin the contrary. The Lawyer here might have remembered (if Prejudice had not stood in the way of such Reflection) that the Advice of *Moses* was, *That they should love the Stranger, in giving him Food*
and

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*and Raiment; for they were Strangers in the Land of Egypt *.*

Once more give me leave to observe a little the exceeding Kindness and Generosity of this *Samaritan*: As he journeyed, he found a poor Traveller stripped of his Raiment, and wounded, and half-dead—He was immediately affected with the Object, and had Compassion on him, and went to him;—without considering the Inconvenience and Danger of the Place, the Necessity of his own Affairs, or the Person of the Man who lay in these calamitous Circumstances: He *went to him, and bound up his Wounds, pouring in Oil and Wine †.*—Had he been of less Excellency of Temper than he was, he might have found Reasons plausible enough, after having looked on him, to have passed by, and prosecuted his Journey without farther Notice. He might have pleaded with himself, and with some Colour of Prudence too, that the Man who lay before him was unknown to him; and common Discretion required, that he ought not to

* Dent. x. 19.

† Luke x. 35.

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hazard his own Life to save that of a Stranger.—He might have argued farther; that though he did not know his Person or his Family, yet he saw he was a *Jew*, and therefore did not deserve his Compassion. For as there was no Intercourse with those two People, but that of Enmity and Hatred, it is likely that all the Return he should meet with for his Charity, would be that of Malice and Ingratitude.—Nay, more than this, he was a sworn Enemy to his Religion, and professed a contemptuous Opinion of the *Samaritan* Worship, and of the Temple at Mount *Gerizim*; and therefore it would be inconsistent with a true Zeal for the Honour of God, and for *Samaria*, the Place of his Worship, if he should condescend to relieve one who was a declared Enemy of their God, and of the true Religion.—This, I say, had been very plausible arguing, and, according to the common Rate of Things, and in the Measure in which Men often deal their Charity to one another, might have passed for very prudent and discreet Conduct.—But the *Samaritan*, we see, was of another Spirit; the Nobleness

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ness and Beneficence of whose Nature was such, that he was not to be diverted from his Purpose of doing Good by any such mean and selfish Views. All that he considered was, the Circumstance of the Person in Necessity; and he needed no Arguments to induce him to assist him, when he saw that he stood in need of his Assistance. And to shew that he had an Heart perfectly sincere, and that his Charity was founded only in the Goodness and Generosity of his Principles and Temper, without the least Allay of Partiality or Hypocrisy, our Saviour is very particular in laying before us the Manner of his putting it in Practice—*As soon as he saw him, says he, he had Compassion on him.* Such was the Humanity of his Disposition, that he was immediately affected: And his Compassion did not evaporate in a vain charitable Wish, but *he went to him, and bound up his Wounds, pouring in Oil and Wine.* And, when he had thus eased him of his Pains, and brought him a little to himself, he *set him on his own Beast*—He put himself to a real Inconvenience to help and accommodate this unhappy Stranger, *and brought him to an Inn,*

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Inn, and took care of him. And here, one would have thought, his Care might have ended ; and he might reasonably have excused himself from any farther Concern about him, when he had lodged him safely in his own Country, and among his own Kindred :—But, like a truly charitable Person, he is uneasy in desisting from a good Work happily begun, till he had put his last Hand to it, and rendered it complete : And therefore, *on the Morrow, when he departed,* he gave to the Host Money in hand, and an unlimited Commiffion for defraying any farther Expences—*Take care of him,* says he ; *and whatsoever thou expendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.* This therefore was the Story, and this of the *Samaritan* the engaging Character, which the *Jews* were to endeavour to imitate ; and we are not to wonder, if, in the Application, after such an amiable Description of it, when our Saviour puts the Question directly, *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was Neighbour unto him that fell among the Thieves?* We are not to wonder, I say, that, in spite of all his former Prejudice, the *Jew* should

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should answer, *He that shewed Mercy on him*—Go then, said *Jesus* unto him, while his Affections were yet warm about him, and he was well disposed to bear it, *Go, and do thou likewise.* Go, and take along with you this plain Lesson of Instruction.—You are a *Jew*, and your Mind has been long inured to mean and narrow Notions; but learn, from this Instance which I have given you of a truly beneficent Temper, to correct your Pride, and to enlarge your Charity.—You are sensibly touched, I see, with the Beauty of the *Samaritan's* Character, and conceive a just Indignation at the Baseness and Wickedness of the Priest and Levite: Imitate therefore in your Practice, not the Priest, or the Levite, but the good *Samaritan*: And to shew that you applaud his Compassion to the *Jew*, do you, who are a *Jew*, do the same good Office to a Stranger; or, if Occasion requires it, even to a *Samaritan*. For the Laws of Nature are unchangeable; and you will in vain pretend that you love God, unless you love your Brother, who is an Image of him: *For if a Man say that I love God, and hateth*

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*his Brother, he is a Lyar. For this Commandment have we from God, That he who loveth God, love his Brother also.**

And thus much for the Parable, the several Circumstances of which would very naturally admit of many Reflections for our religious Improvement.—Two, I may take for granted, cannot have escaped you, they are so necessarily connected with the main Scope and Design of this Story. *First*, That you would always bear in your Minds, that it is the Temper of that Religion you profess, to be universally good and beneficent: For now, under the Christian Dispensation, all Distinctions of Men are become void; every Wall of Partition is demolished; all the World is become one People, subject to the Laws of one common Lord, and capable of the Mercies purchased by one common Redeemer. The Precepts of our Religion, the Pattern of the great Author and Finisher of our Faith, the Examples of his holy Apostles, all conspire to lead us to the Practice of universal Love and Charity. *As*

* 1 John iv. 20, 21.

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*we have Opportunity, we are to do Good to all Men * : We are to abound in Love one towards another, and to all Men ; and ever to follow that which is good, both among ourselves, and to all Men †.* And nothing, perhaps, is more to the Honour of, or a greater Evidence of the Divinity of our Religion, than the bountiful and free Spirit of its Charity: For true Goodness is as unbounded as that God who is the Author of it ; and if we would imitate Him in that Perfection, we must study to wear off all Little-ness and Contractedness of Spirit ; for Partiality to Men is a Sanctuary to Uncharitableness, and nothing better than a plausible Excuse for Pride and Ill-nature. My Business, if I will follow the Precepts and Example of my Saviour, is to do Good to all : And it matters not to me, if I can promote their Happiness, whether they be Acquaintance or Strangers, Countrymen or Foreigners, Friends or Enemies ; of contrary Persuasions, or of bad Practices ; whether they be of the Eastern, or the Western Church ; whether they dwell in the North, or in the

* Gal. vi. 10.

† 1 Thef. iii. 12.

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South. Let their Differences be what they will, if they are Men, they are for that Reason Objects of my Care and Compassion. For though I must have Reasons to proportion and adjust my Charity, I will admit of none which forbid it.

Secondly, Let us farther learn from this Story of our Saviour, not to esteem of Men and their Religion so much by their Faith, as by what they do; to consider not so much whether their Opinions are (in our particular Judgment) right and sound, as whether their Actions are (in the Judgment of all Men) good and praise-worthy. The *Jew* here applies himself to our Saviour, to be informed who was his Neighbour; *i. e.* whom he was to esteem in that near degree of Relation to him, as to love him as himself. Our Saviour tells him very plainly, and makes him own it too, that, supposing himself in Circumstances of Distress, it was that *Samaritan* who should relieve him; for this *Samaritan* had an excellent Spirit in him; and it appeared from his Mercy to this *Jew*, this Stranger, this Enemy,

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my, to himself and his Nation, that he understood the essential Part of all Religion, which was doing Good. The Priest and Levite had Minds better informed, better Books to guide them, and juster Conceptions of the Deity ; but though they understood Religion, yet they would not practise it : And therefore this *Samaritan*, with all his Mistakes about him, was a better Man, and, for his Goodness, more worthy of Esteem and Reverence, than those proud and peevish People, whose Religion had not inspired them with Compassion enough to assist the Miserable. For however false his other Notions might be, so much is very certain, that (what is of most moment in Religion) he had right Notions of Charity and Beneficence. And how much these are the Sentiments of this generous Society here assembled, appears very plainly from the Nature and Design of their Undertaking ; which has many strong Arguments to enforce and recommend it, that may be drawn from the Arguments of true Policy and Wisdom, as well as from the Spirit of our Blessed Saviour. *First*, from the Rules
of

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of true Policy and Wisdom, it may be strongly argued in Defence of your excellent Design (which can already plead Experience for its Truth and Usefulness), that it tends to enlighten the Minds, and sweeten and civilize the Natures of thousands of poor ignorant Children, brought up in a sort of Profession of Christianity, but in reality in Heathen Ignorance and Savageness of Temper; that it tends to raise them from the Dust, to rescue them from the most deplorable Poverty and ignominious Sloth, to teach them Industry, to shew them the Beauty of well-ordered Government, and make them Partakers of the civil and polished Arts of Life; that it tends to reconcile their Minds (hitherto tinged with a sort of innate Rancour against us) to the *English* Government and the *Protestant* Religion; guarding them, by the most effectual Means, against all Influence from *Popish* Measures and Counsels, which have so often involved us in Blood and Confusion; that it tends to convince them experimentally, that we esteem them as Brethren, younger Sons of our Mother-Country, and desire nothing so

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much as to establish that Unity of Affection and Interest, which ought to be seen among People of so near Relation and Alliance.

It has been observed by a wise Prelate, who seems to have had a perfect Knowledge of the ancient and modern State of the Country, that *Ireland* has suffered by nothing so much as by a conceited Imagination of Descent and Blood, and a pleasing Dream of recovering the Possessions of their Ancestors by the dint of the Sword. History shows the Truth of this Observation, by recounting the many unsuccessful Rebellions it has engaged them in, and thereby as frequently subjected them to a Forfeiture of their Lives, Liberties, and Fortunes. From the Conquest of that Kingdom to the Reign of Queen ELIZABETH, their Commotions and Rebellions took their Rise wholly from this Principle: But from thence down to the late Revolution, the Causes of their Rebellion have been of a mixed Nature; partly to recover their ancient Dominion, but principally to propagate their Religion, by all the horrible Ways which the cruel
Spirit

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Spirit of Popery could inspire into the blindest of its Votaries. The last ever-memorable Period of Time gave them better Notions of things, by turning their Thoughts from the wild Schemes of Conquest, to the improving their Fortunes by the steady and slow, but surer and unenvied Methods of Industry and Labour. It is the Design of this Society to pursue and carry on these Measures to as great a Degree of Perfection as their Opportunities, and the Encouragement they meet with, will enable them to do.

In all Nations, Riches arise from the natural and artificial Produce of the Country ; but they chiefly depend upon the Industry of the Inhabitants, and great Numbers of them being employed in honest Labour and useful Arts. And the poorest People, while they are thus engaged, are as useful to the Public as the richer Sort ; and as they are much more numerous, they contribute more to the Increase of the general Stock : And therefore, in the Wisdom of good Policy, both for them and for ourselves, we can do

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no such important Service to the People of *Ireland*, as by infusing into them, what has been long wanting in that Country, a Spirit of Labour and Industry, and training up their Poor from their earliest Years (when Habits of Virtue make the best Impressions) to the Arts of improving the Soil and Manufactures of the Kingdom: A Method much more likely to procure them all the Comforts and Conveniencies of Life, and the secure Enjoyment of Property, than any the most successful Attempts they can hope to make by the Sword; which has often laid waste whole Kingdoms, and *Ireland* in particular, but was never yet known to improve and enrich a Country. These, you will observe, are Arguments chiefly drawn from human Policy, but they are founded on the Constitution of things, and on Natural and Revealed Religion, which join in requiring Industry and Diligence in all the Stations of human Life. In St. *Paul's* Judgment, *Godliness* (and by the same Reason, every other Branch of our Duty) is so much the more *our reasonable Service*, as it has the *Pro-*
mise

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mise of this World, as well as of that which is to come * : And therefore, though doing Good to the Souls of Men, through a Christian Concern for their spiritual Welfare, be the principal End of this Charity, and the strongest Argument for its Encouragement, yet we ought to call in all the Helps we can, and refuse none of the Motives of temporal Happiness and Prosperity to promote it. But the Truth is, as Religion must bless and sanctify this good Work of yours, so it must justify its Wisdom. These poor and ignorant People are now very dangerous Enemies in the Hands of Popery, whose Emissaries bring them up in the worst Superstition and strongest Aversion to *English* Laws and Government, and to the Protestant Religion. And what greater Danger might we not apprehend, what ruinous Mischiefs might we not fear, if the Spirit of religious Enmity, the old, but active, persecuting Spirit, which has already shed such Deluges of Blood, should revive, and turn itself against us, when we had strengthened the Powers of these People, by making them indu-

* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

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strious and rich? And therefore, above all things, we ought to take care to implant in them a true Sense of the Christian Religion, as laid down in the Scriptures, and a just Abhorrence of the superstitious and mischievous Religion of their Forefathers.— This, I think, is the main Point in view; because, without this conscientious Care, the Converts to Protestantism may become, like some of the *American* Converts to Christianity, not the Credit, but the Disgrace, not the Advantage and Security, but the Mischief and Ruin, of their Benefactors. But the Charity before us, so far as human Prudence can operate, is calculated to prevent this Mischief; and, by the joint Obligation of Interest and Religion, to gain their Love and Affection, as well as secure their Loyalty and Obedience to their Mother-Kingdom. That is not to be done, we have experienced, by the Terror of the Sword; nor, if it could be so effected, ought it to be done: Humanity detests the Practice; and even where Necessity draws it, it makes Men Slaves, not Friends; while the only justifiable Method of Conquest is to gain
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the Hearts, not the Heads, of our Enemies. This is the Method now recommended by your Example, regulated by your Wisdom, and supported by your Goodness, most plainly calculated for the mutual Benefit of both Nations. *Ireland*, in the successful Progress of it, will see her poor Natives honestly and wisely instructed, gently and humanely civilized, and enriched by Industry; and such an enlivened Prospect of Prosperity spreading over her whole Country, as may reasonably be expected from the Advantage of her Situation, and her near Relation and Alliance to a great Kingdom. And that Kingdom will reap her Advantages, not from the crouching Poverty and abject Slavery, but from the Riches and Union, and faithful Affection of a neighbour Country, of more Moment to her, in point of Trade, and Strength, and Security, than the Addition of the whole Continent.—But these Considerations have perhaps carried me too far from the View of my main Argument, which was,

Secondly,

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Secondly, To quicken and inflame your Zeal for the Prosecution of this pious Design, from its being so highly agreeable to the Spirit of our Blessed Saviour. The Story before you has explained that Spirit better than a thousand Arguments; and when you reflect upon the several moving Circumstances in it, they will, I hope, animate your Resolution to encourage and support this well-intended Charity. The Object of your Care (you will suffer me to pursue the Allusion) is a poor and distressed Stranger, naturally indeed a Brother, but alienated by the evil and inhuman Temper of a bad Religion, which, instead of cultivating the Gospel-Spirit of Love and Union, has instilled into his Heart a rancorous Malice and Enmity, and forbid him all kind Inter-course and Society with his Neighbour. We may say of him too, without straining the Comparison, that he was fallen *among Thieves*; and his Poverty proves to you that he was *stripped of his Raiment*, and his Substance drained from him: And how often has it been literally true, that they have
wounded

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wounded and left him half-dead, by engaging him in wicked and unsuccessful Enterprizes against his native Country, which have ended in most frightful Havoc and Devastation, and when the *Priest* and *Levite* should, in Charity to his Soul, and Compassion to his Circumstances, have instructed him in the true Gospel-Religion, and taught him Sweetness and Moderation of Temper, Love to his Neighbour, Affection to his Country, and Loyalty to his natural Prince; they have only *come and looked on him, and, passing by*, left him in the same naked and, miserable Condition that they found him; or, if they bestowed any Care upon him, it was only to raise and support him for the cruel Designs of their Religion, which they are ever plotting, and ever ready to execute.—Happily for him, the good *Samaritan* is now come to relieve him; he has observed him, *and has Compassion on him*; and his Compassion is exerted in the kindest and most effectual Manner; he clothes him, trains him up to Industry, binds up his Wounds, teaches him to forget all past Enmity, receives him as a Friend and Brother, and,

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and, instead of exasperating, *pours in Oil and Wine*, comforts and relieves his Spirit, soothes and sweetens his Temper, *sets him upon his own Beast*, lends him an helping Hand, receives him to all the Kindness and Comforts of Hospitality, and traces out a Method for him, by pursuing which, he may not only secure these great Advantages to himself, but transmit them down to his latest Posterity.—Let the *Jew* now ask himself, which of these three is *Neighbour* to this distressed Person; his Tongue may utter a Falsehood, but his Heart will speak the Truth, *He that shewed Mercy on him*. Go then, all ye of that peevish and narrow-spirited Religion, Go, and do likewise:—Let the Goodness of this Example induce you to practise the same kind Behaviour, and, instead of breathing out Wrath and Threatenings against those, whom you odiously and unrighteously style *Hereticks* and *Strangers*, treat them as Brethren; and, as the Apostle enjoins you, under the worst Circumstances of Difference and Error, *be pitiful, be courteous*: For, after so many unsuccessful Attempts to propagate your Religion upon the

Prin-

S E R M O N IV. 157

Principles of Persecution and Bloodshed, it is high time for you to be ashamed of, and amend your Practice; and take the Maxim to regulate your Conduct from a great Ecclesiastic of your own Persuasion.— * “ The
 “ true Religion ought to be preserved and
 “ propagated by the same Means which
 “ established it, viz. Preaching, accompa-
 “ nied with Discretion and Prudence, the
 “ Practice of every Virtue, and, above all,
 “ of a Patience without Bounds. When
 “ it shall please God to join to these Means
 “ the Gift of Miracles, the Progress will be
 “ the more speedy.”

* *Sixième Discours sur l'Histoire Ecclesiastique, par M. l'Abbé FLEURY, Prieur d'Argenteuil, & Confesseur du Roi. 1724. Sect. xiv.*

“ La vraie religion doit se conserver & s'étendre par
 “ les mêmes moiens, qui l'ont établie, la prédication,
 “ accompagnée de discretion & de prudence, la pra-
 “ tique de toutes les vertus, & sur tout d'une patience
 “ sans bornes. Quand il plaira à Dieu d' y joindre le
 “ don des miracles, le progresz sera plus prompt.”

A S E R-

Principles of Perfection and Holiness, is
a high time for you to be alarmed of, and
amend your Practice; and take the Means
to regulate your Conduct from a great Re-
flection of your own Perfection.—I. The
true Religion ought to be perfected and
propagated by the same Means which
established it: viz. Preaching, accompa-
nied with Distinction and Purity, the
Practice of every Virtue, and above all,
of a Patient without Bounds. When
we shall please God to join to these Means
the Gift of Miracles, the Preachers will be
the more speedy.

* Another Discourse on the same Subject, for
the same Church, from the same Author, &c.
in the Year 1724. See p. 10.
The same Discourse, this is contained in a smaller
and more modest manner, and I am enabled to pre-
sent it to you with the same ease and freedom.
I have no more to say, but I shall be glad to
hear from you, and I shall be glad to hear
from you, and I shall be glad to hear from you.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED at the
CATHEDRAL CHURCH of *YORK*,

September the 22d, 1745;

On Occasion of the
REBELLION in *SCOTLAND*.

S E R M O N

Preached at the

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF YORK,

September the 2nd, 1795.

On Occasion of the

REBELLION IN SCOTLAND.

To the Reverend

The C L E R G Y

OF THE

DIOCESE of YORK.

My Reverend Brethren,

PLEASE to accept the following Sermon as an Instruction from me, in these dangerous Days, to exert yourselves in Defence of your Country. I have chosen one Topic of Admonition. The same, and many more, are open to your Consideration ; for as an honest Clergyman cannot want Zeal, so

M

neither

neither can he be at a Loss for Argument in Defence of his Holy Religion, his King, and the Laws of his Country.

Popery, and Arbitrary Power, so often checked and defeated by this Honest and Gallant People, are now making a new Attempt upon us; and by a Way which ought, in a strong and peculiar Manner, to raise our Indignation; the Countenance and Support of *France* and *Spain*.

I pray God give you Spirit and Courage, and a clear Understanding, to instruct your People; and enable you by his Grace to shew yourselves, in the midst of Danger, shin-
ing

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ing Examples of Integrity in your
Religion, Loyalty to your King,
and Fidelity to your Country.

I am,

Your affectionate Brother,

THO. EBOR.

M 2

SER-

ing Examples of Integrity in your
Religion, Loyalty to your King,
and Fidelity to your Country.

THE END.

S E R M O N V.

ECCLES. viii. 2.

I counsel thee to keep the King's Commandment, and that in Regard of the Oath of God.

THE Design of the wise Author, Solomon, is to secure from the Subject that Honour and Obedience which is due to the King, as the Protector and Guardian of the public Safety; and his Manner of urging it is worth observing. *I counsel thee*, says he, *to keep the King's Commandment*. My Age and Experience, who have so long held the Reins of Government in my Hand, gives me a Title to press this Advice upon you with more than ordinary Authority; and therefore, because I am so well acquainted with the evil Consequences of Disobedience, and have seen, in so many Instances, Faction and Rebellion ending always in the Mischief, and often in the utter

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Ruin of turbulent and unquiet Spirits, I counsel you, I would advise you, as the most prudent Method you can take, most for the Peace and Comfort of your Life, that you *keep the King's Commandment, i. e.* that you be obedient to the Laws of your Country, honour him who is the Protector and Preserver of them, and shew yourself an Example of a quiet and peaceable Disposition; this is certainly your wisest Course, and I would counsel you to follow it. But that is not all, that is in it; your Obedience is tied upon you by other Arguments; and ye must needs be subject not only for Wrath, not only to avoid the Inconveniences of Rebellion and the just Displeasure of the Magistrate, but for Conscience Sake; for you must remember, that you have entered into the most solemn religious Engagement, and that your Obedience to the Government, under which you live, is become your indispensable Duty, *in regard to the Oath of God*, which you have taken to maintain and support it. Lay these things together, therefore, and imprint them upon your Minds, and see whether I have not good Reason

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Reason to press this Advice upon you as of the greatest Consequence ; and not only to counsel, but to adjure you, by the Regard which you have to the Peace and Safety of your Life, and by the Allegiance which you owe to *God*, that you *keep the King's Commandment*.

It will not, I believe, be thought an unreasonable Juncture (dropping for the present the first Part of *Solomon's* Advice, concerning the Inconvenience and Mischief of Rebellion, to those who are engaged in it ; which, however, will be considered too in the Course of the Argument) to dwell very particularly upon the second, and to examine into the great Importance of that Consideration, which demands our Obedience to the Supreme Magistrate, as our Duty in regard to *the Oath of God*, by which we have engaged and promised it : And the best way perhaps of doing Justice to this Part of the Argument, will be by shewing the great Iniquity of Perjury, as it affects our Fidelity to the Government which protects us ; for then it will appear, by very clear and strong

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Reflection, how much we are obliged to be peaceable and obedient *to the King's Commandment in regard to the Oath of God.*

I said I thought the doing this would not be at this Time unseasonable: I should have said it is most necessary; for Perjury, productive of Rebellion, is no common Calamity, but such an one as threatens the very Being of our Nation, and the Ruin of every thing, which is dear and valuable to us: And our Allegiance to God, our Loyalty to the best of Kings, our Love to the happiest Country under Heaven, and our common Charity to the Souls of Men, make it our necessary Duty, that all of us contribute, in our proper Sphere and Station, to expell this fatal Mischief, and to remove this foul Scandal from amongst us.

I propose it to you, therefore, that you would take Occasion, from this very Advice of *Solomon*, which I have read to you, to go along with me in reflecting upon the monstrous Wickedness of Men, who disobey *the King's Commandment*, or, which is the same

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same thing, who betray the Laws and Interest of their Country, in direct Violation of *the Oath of God*, by which they have obliged themselves to preserve them. And we shall find, that as the Iniquity of public Perjury appears in *some* Circumstances, which are common to every Degree of that Sin, so it is still, in a more aggravating Manner, distinguished by *others*, which are peculiar to this *worst* Degree of it. And,

First, This Perjury proceeds from a false and perfidious Heart, and therefore brings a most foul Stain upon a Man's Character, and shews that he wants the most amiable Part of it, Sincerity. Sincerity is a natural Duty; for whether I am sworn to it or not, I am obliged to speak the Truth, and to keep my Promise. To be a Lyar is of all others the most odious and shameful Quality; and we have almost all of us so quick a Sense of our Obligations to Truth and Fidelity, that we cannot brook even the most distant Imputation of having forfeited them: Sincerity in our Words, and Faithfulness in our Promises, is the highest Commendation
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that can be given of us; and there is no hearing the Character, without envying the Possessor of it, when we are told of any Man, that he uses Truth and Plainness in all his Words and Doings, that his Tongue is ever the true Interpreter of his Mind, and his Expressions the lively Image of his Thoughts and Affections, and his outward Actions exactly agreeable to his inward Purposes. But if he is full of insidious Devices, and little Tricks and Fetches of Craft and Cunning; if he is all over false Appearance and deceitful Disguise, both in his Words and Actions, this will spoil and taint every good Quality he can have besides. Nay, the more extraordinary his other Qualities, so much the worse; for, if very considerable and useful Parts are joined to a very wicked and insincere Mind, he will be the more dangerous and mischievous Hypocrite: So that if there was nothing worse in Perjury than this, that it is a Breach of a natural Duty, and that it brings a Stain upon a Man's Reputation, which all the good Qualities in the World cannot wipe out, this alone were a very heinous Circumstance,

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stance, and sufficient, one would think, to deter any one from being guilty of it, even in Reverence to himself, and in Regard to his Honour and good Name. But there is much more in it than this; for when I have bound my Allegiance with an Oath, that Oath, in the very End and Nature of it, implies a more peculiar Obligation to discharge it truly; for the Purpose of my entering into it is to give the very best Testimony that I can of my Fidelity, and that the Person with whom I am concerned may thence receive the best Assurance, that he may safely repose in me the greatest Trust and Confidence; and therefore to deceive him under such Circumstances of Affiance in me, is the vilest and most abominable Treachery: And how shall I answer it to myself, if I have appealed to the great God of Heaven for Confirmation of it, and called upon him in the most solemn Manner to be a Witness of my Truth, or an Avenger of my Falseness? For all this is implied in the religious Usage of an Oath; for then I am understood to appeal to God as a Witness of my Thoughts and Actions; to that God, who is
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infinitely true, and can deceive no Man ; to that God, who is infinitely wise, and can be deceived of none, whose all-seeing Eye is continually upon my Heart and Actions, and whose Ear is a constant Witness of all my Words, and ought therefore at all Times to deter me from Falsehood and Hypocrisy. How bold and daring then must my Impiety be, if I appeal to him, as present, to confirm what I know to be false, and call upon him, who is Truth itself, to bear Testimony to my Iniquity ! Is not this to put the greatest Affront and the foulest Scorn upon God himself, and to treat his most holy Majesty with a less Degree of Reverence than I would pay even to a good Man ? There is no conceiving the strange Impudence of this Impiety, in appealing to God himself to bear Testimony to my Integrity, when I am conscious that I am selling my Soul for the Wages of Hypocrisy and Falshood. This Perjury is a shameless Insolence in Wickedness ; a Sin even of a deeper Dye than Scarlet. Other Sins carry their Shame along with them : The Drunkard, the Thief, and the Adulterer,

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compared to the false Swearer, are Sinners of some Modesty; so far from desiring God to be a Witness of their base and atrocious Actions, they would avoid his Presence, and retire from Him, if they could; but Perjury has this daring Degree of Wickedness peculiar to it, that it wilfully affronts even the Majesty of God, and calls upon Him to see and to observe with what a steady and confirmed Impiety they can dishonour his Name, and defy his Vengeance. For there is this further implied in the Nature of an Oath, that we appeal to his Justice, as well as to his Knowledge, and do in effect desire Him, that our Falsehood may be followed by his severest Vengeance; and sure nothing can add greater Weight to our Obligations to Truth and Fidelity, which are already bound upon us by the just Fear of God's Curse and Indignation: For Perjury, under these Circumstances, is a very desperate Degree of Wickedness indeed, and the miserable Wretch, who is guilty of it, has taken his utmost Pains to shut himself out from any Appeal to God's Mercy; for he has voluntarily thrown himself upon the
Divine

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Divine Justice, and voluntarily exposed himself to its utmost Rigour and Severity, and he is in so much worse Circumstances than any other Sinner, that one may almost say he has not so much as left himself a Reserve in the Goodness and Compassion of God Almighty.

Let him remember, but let him tremble at the Remembrance, that when he took the Holy Book into his Hand, and bound his Fidelity by his Religion, he was understood to mean—
 ‘ Let this Engagement
 ‘ of mine be made in the most solemn
 ‘ Manner, and let all the World take Notice, that if I am false to Truth and to
 ‘ the Trust reposed in me, I desire no Part
 ‘ in the Goodness and Mercy of God, nor
 ‘ in the Blood of my Redeemer; may the
 ‘ Indignation and Curse of God attend me
 ‘ here, and may my Name be blotted out
 ‘ of the Book of Life!’

These are the aggravating Circumstances, which attend the Commission of this monstrous Sin in every Degree of it, that it taints
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and corrupts a Man's Honour and Reputation, and is a most wicked Affront and Indignity offered to the Majesty of Heaven. But when it appears in Treachery and Disobedience to the Civil Government, it is then seen with new Circumstances of Horror; for that most certainly proceeds from the most vile and detested Principles, and tends to bring about the worst and most unworthy Purposes.

View it in its Principles and Motives, and you will find the Foundations of it laid in the darkest and most black Dispositions; in Men, whose Minds and Consciences are perpetually intoxicated by Ambition, by Pride, by Covetousness, by Revenge, by Faction (which last is nothing else but a wicked Compound of Pride and Covetousness of Ambition and Revenge), united and knit together by Hypocrisy: Qualities, all of them ungovernable, and which continually animate Men, who are enslaved by them, to break loose from the most sacred Ties of Reason, of Religion, and of their

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sworn Allegiance to God, their King, and Country.

For to Men of these Dispositions, it is no Argument of Peace and Obedience, that the Administration of a Government is in the wisest Hands, and that every thing is managed with the exactest Justice and most scrupulous Observance of the Laws.—If their Pride and Ambition is not satisfied, and if they are not distinguished by Posts of Dignity and Honour, they will endeavour to spoil the Order and Regularity of things; and if they are not allowed a Share in the conducting it, they will contrive Ways to clog the Wheels of Government, and make it drive heavily, if they cannot overturn it.

To Men of these Dispositions, it is no Argument of Loyalty and a peaceful De-meanour, that every thing is secured to them which can make their Lives comfortable and easy; that their Property stands upon the Basis of the Laws; that their Goods and Possessions are guarded from all Violence

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lence and Outrage; and that every Man is allowed to dwell safely *under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree* * — All these are inconsiderable Advantages, not worth our Thanks or our Remembrance — It is a sufficient Grievance, and will abundantly justify their Disobedience, that they are cut off from every Opportunity of enriching themselves and Families, and must submit to be contented with a moderate and easy Fortune, when they might be laying the Foundation of distinguished Grandeur and Magnificence.

To Men of these Dispositions, whose Hearts boil with Malice and Revenge, it is no Argument for a meek and dutiful Behaviour, that they live under the Protection of the mildest and best-natured Prince, and the most just and equitable Government. For if they are not allowed the Pleasure of Revenge, and to execute their Malice upon the Men they hate, in spite of all Obligations to the contrary from Religion and common Gratitude, they will revile the

* 1 Kings iv. 25.

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King, and fly at his Name and Honour with the greatest Virulence, and with the most false and odious Calumnies, and blacken the Administration by artful Misrepresentations, invidious Constructions, and malicious Aggravations.

To Men of these Dispositions, who feed upon Faction, and love to live in Storms, it is no Argument to excite their Zeal for their King, and for the Honour and Interest of their Country, that they are blessed with the happy Influence of a Government, which labours for the Peace and Prosperity of the Public, and employs its utmost Wisdom, and its utmost Care, to suppress the lurking Spirit of Tumult and Disquiet. They are uneasy, if they are not active in Sedition; and that very Tranquillity embitters the Pleasure and Happiness of their Lives, which is the greatest Blessing to every body else. What can be said more to expose these wicked Principles, and to shew this blackest Degree of Perjury in its proper Colours, this foul Scandal to our Religion, this base Dishonour to a Man's Reputation, this monstrous

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strous Impiety to God, this vile Treachery to our King and Country? What can be said more to expose it, and to make the Guilty as contemptible as they deserve to be, in the Eyes of just and peaceable, and honest People? What, but to consider a little to what unworthy and mischievous Purposes it tends directly.

I would not falsify my Word and Oath, although it were to effect some good Design; though it were to protect the Innocent, to help the Fatherless and Widow, to save or to assist the Miserable; though it were to guard my Country from impending Mischief: And shall I then be induced to do it in order to pervert all Equity and Justice, to endanger, or destroy my Country? How naturally do we exclaim against the Villany, and how heartily join our Voices, in throwing all the Reproach we can upon the perfidious and false Swearer? How do we chase him out of the Courts of Justice, and almost banish him the common Society of Men?

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Behold the Man, we say (pointing him out to Disgrace and Punishment), who, by the Help of his abominable Perjury, can oppress the Righteous, in spite of the Justice of his Cause, the Integrity of the Judge, and almost of the Providence of God.

Behold the Man, who confounds Right and Wrong, Truth and Falsehood, Justice and Injustice; who can make the Oppressor insolent, and the Innocent wretched; who can render the Decisions of Juries as precarious as those of the Sword; who can despoil Virtue of its best Security, and arm and protect the Malicious and the Murderer.

Behold the Man, who can hear and see, unmoved, and even with an Air of Joy in his Success, the Lamentations of the Oppressed, the Cries of injured Orphans, the Sighs and Tears of distressed Widows, the Ruin of whole Families, and the shedding of innocent Blood. Is our Indignation just against such Villanies, and shall we sit indifferent when those of much greater Magnitude

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nitude are transacting? These Effects of private Perjury are detestable enough; but what are they, compared to the miserable Consequences of Perjury ending in Rebellion?

To enkindle in you a just Zeal and Abhorrence of such Practices, I must not merely tell you that they intercept, in particular Cases, the happy Influence of the Magistrate, but that they strike at the very Foundations of Government itself; I must not tell you that they injure Property, but destroy it; not that they stop the Execution of the Laws, but that they pluck them up by the Roots; not that they obstruct Justice in its Course, and bring undeserved Ruin to the Oppressed, to Orphans, to Widows, to private Families. These Circumstances, hateful as they are, do yet come very short of their Effects; and to give you a full and complete Notion of the Mischiefs of public Perjury and Rebellion, I must pass before your Eyes a melancholy Scene of a fruitful and happy Country made a Place of Desolation, and a Field of Blood;

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I must represent to you, Friends, Neighbours, Brethren, all at fatal Variance, and sheathing their Swords in one another's Bowels; I must represent to you all Property confounded, and our Goods and Possessions made the Prey of the next Invader; I must fill up the frightful Scene with Houses torn down and rifled; Temples, which now appear in their just Beauty and Magnificence, defaced and levelled with the Ground, Villages burnt up, Cities laid in Ashes: In one Word, I must represent to your Eyes (what I hope you will never see but in Imagination) our excellent King, possessed of as much Justice and Mercy, and good Nature, as ever Prince was endowed with, falling by the Hands of blood-thirsty Rebellion; our Country ruined; our Religion, Laws, and Liberties, wrested and torn from us! And, to close all (if God for our Sins should suffer That to be the Issue), I must represent to you the bravest Nation in the World, who used to give Law to others, and to be had in Reverence of all their Neighbours, made the Scorn and Derision of those that hate them, and ignominiously filling

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ing up the Triumph of an insolent Conqueror; one, who is under such Obligations to the most encroaching and rapacious People, that the Riches and very Life-Blood of three Kingdoms will not satisfy them; one, who has been bred up in a Hatred of the Protestant Religion, and in a zealous Attachment to that, which is little better than a sad Corruption of the Christian, and a Medley of Wickedness and Superstition; one, who has been educated in the tyrannical Maxims of corrupted Courts, who neither love, nor understand the Liberties and Interests of Mankind. For, if this Rebellion, rising from a Cloud no bigger than a Man's Hand, should grow up into a dreadful Storm, and scatter Desolation round us, it will owe its Progress to the Countenance and Support of *France* and *Spain*, our old and inveterate Enemies, who have no other Reason for disturbing our Repose, but because we endeavour to stop the Overflowings of their Tyranny, and stand up in Defence of the Liberties and Repose of *Europe*. God forbid their wicked Machinations should take Effect! Providence has

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often confounded them, and we humbly hope will find out a Way to save us once again : But, if they are ordained to be the Scourge of a sinful People, the Punishment will fit the heavier upon us, for coming from such Hands—Let us humble ourselves before the Throne of God, acknowledge his Justice, and implore his Mercy ; and, at the same time, stand up as becomes us, and shew ourselves Men : And, for a Pattern to our Conduct, let us look into the Annals of that illustrious Queen, now with God, by the Bravery and Wisdom of whose Arms and Councils these haughty Tyrants were once humbled, and humbled to that Degree, as almost literally to crouch to us for Bread : And shall we now submit ? Shall a Nation, whose Establishment is founded, as to Religion, in Reason and the pure Sentiments of the Gospel ; and as to its Civil Policy, in the tenderest Regard for the Happiness and Liberties of human Kind, receive Law from those, whose Religion is such as an honest Heathen would be ashamed of, and whose Government is absolute Tyranny ? God forbid — We are not yet so fallen — Let

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us be true to our Engagements, and our Duty to the best of Kings; *He* will be true to *us*, and stand up in Defence of those Laws, which have inviolably been the Rule of his Government; but Falsehood and Perfidiousness will undermine his Councils, disarm his Forces, and defeat his best Endeavours for the Public; and therefore, if such, in our present Circumstances of living happily under the best Constitution, are like to be the fatal Effects of Perjury and Rebellion, you will all, I am sure, join with me in affirming, that they who, in spite of their most solemn Oaths, can forfeit their Allegiance, and lend an helping Hand to hasten such dreadful Ruin as this upon Us, must be Men, whom neither a natural Sense of Good and Evil, nor Duty to the Magistrate, nor Love to their Country, nor Justice to their Neighbour, nor Compassion to their Fellow-Subjects, nor the Presence of God, nor an Appeal to his Knowledge, nor an Appeal to his Justice, can keep within the Bounds of Fidelity and Truth. — This Reflection you will make, and this Reflection will kindle in your Breasts a just
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and noble Ardour to hunt out and prosecute this spreading Wickedness, this horrible Abuse of God's holy Name, this open Contempt of his Judgment, this insolent Defiance of his Vengeance, this Treason against human Society ; which undermines the very Foundations of Public Peace and Justice, and the private Security of every Man's Life and Fortune.—It is the least We can do for the Credit of our Religion, for the Honour of our King, and for the Prosperity of our Country ; to make this Vice as detestable as it is impious, that all the World may see that we are not yet so decayed in our Religion, but that we have a conscientious Sense of its Obligations ; not yet so abandoned to all Sense of Gratitude and Duty, but that we can be jealous for the Honour and for the Happiness of the best of Kings ; not yet so out of Love with Liberty, or so ignorant of the Means to preserve it ; not yet so far deluded in our Judgment, but that we can discern the Difference between a wise and free Government, established by wholesome Laws, protected by the justest and mildest Prince, and guarded and secured

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cured by the Religion and Courage, and Fidelity, of Loyal Subjects ; between such a Government, and that of a Popish Fugitive, brought in by Blood and Devastation, settled upon the Ruins of all Law and Liberty, conducted by the Maxims of a People, who are Strangers to Justice and Goodnature, and supported by the baneful Hands of Treachery and Perfidiousness.

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SERMON V. 187

ured by the Religion and Courage, and
Fidelity of loyal Subjects; between such
a Government, and that of a Popish Tyrant,
brought in by Blood and Devastation,
settled upon the Ruins of all Law and Li-
berty, conducted by the Maxims of a Po-
pish, who are strangers to Justice and Good-
nature, and supported by the powerful Hands
of Treachery and Perfidiousness.

A SER.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED at
KENSINGTON,

ON

Wednesday the 7th of January, 1748:

B E I N G

The Day appointed by Proclamation for a
GENERAL FAST and Humiliation before Almighty
GOD, for imploring his Blessing and Assistance on
the Arms of His Majesty, and for restoring and per-
petuating Peace, Safety, and Prosperity to Himself,
and to his Kingdoms.

SE R M O N

K E W S I N G T O N

WEDNESDAY the 7th of January, 1742.

The Day appointed by Providence for a
Publick Fast, and Humiliation before Almighty
G O D, for imploring His blessing on a
new Year of His Mercy, and His love and
protection over His Church, and His
people, and His Kingdom.

To the Reverend

The C L E R G Y

OF THE

DIOCESSE of YORK.

My Reverend Brethren,

I TAKE the Liberty to transmit to you the following plain Discourse, for doing which I make no Apology, because you have a Right to ask and to know my Sentiments upon those Matters which are the Subject of it.

If my Reflections, therein expressed, are improper and unseasonable,

able, I shall be sorry for it, and can only plead in Excuse an honest Intention in making them.—If they are false, and any one thinks it worth while to convince me that they are so, I will retract them as publicly with all my Heart, and thank my Reprover.---If they are true, I need not intimate to you, how much it is our common Duty to give them very serious Attention,

I am,

My Reverend Brethren,

Your affectionate,

and faithful Friend,

THO. EBOR.

S E R M O N VI.

ROMANS i. 32.

*Who, knowing the Judgment of God
(that they who commit such things
are worthy of Death) not only do
the same, but have Pleasure in
those that do them.*

WHOEVER is conversant in the History of the *Roman Nation*, will see, that it was impossible, in general, to have given a juster Description of the State of Morality among them in the Days of their Decline, than this, which the Apostle has given us in the Chapter from whence the Text is taken. They were once a very brave and gallant People, famed for the Strictness of their moral and their public Virtue; and, though they were in the Errors of Heathenism, yet they had Light enough amongst them to discern the Traces and Obligations of natural Religion; and,

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if their Practice had been suitable to their Knowledge, would have maintained that Grandeur which their Integrity first acquired them. But, notwithstanding all their Advantages, they sunk, by degrees, into the very Dregs of Corruption, and became as infamous and contemned for their Vices, as they were once admired and feared for their Virtues.

The Apostle here has given us a very sad Picture of them, but it is drawn to the Life; and one might justify the Description in every Part of it, from the satyrical Writings of their own Authors.

They knew God, he tells us; and it is certain that many amongst them had very clear, very excellent Notions of the Divinity; but then, *they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful*, neither their Lives nor their Worship was suitable to their Knowledge; *but they became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Hearts were darkened; professing themselves wise, they became Fools*, and fell, in spite of their Understandings,

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standings, into the most fearful Practices of Idolatry and Immorality. *Wherefore God also gave them up unto Uncleanneſs, unto vile Affections, to diſhonour their own Bodies between themſelves* (a moſt prodigious Inſtance of their corrupted Hearts), *as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, God* (in his moſt juſt Diſpleaſure) *gave them over to a reprobate Mind, to do thoſe Things which were ſhocking and abominable, being filled with all Unrighteouſneſs* (ſtraining their Inventions in the Service of it), *Fornication, Wickedneſs, Covetouſneſs, Maliciouſneſs, full of Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whiſperers, Backbiters, Haters of God, deſpiteful, proud Boaſters* (full of Conceit of their own Excellencies), *Inventers of evil things, diſobedient to Parents, without Underſtanding,* (ſtupid and unmoved as to every thing that was truly wiſe and good), *Covenant Breakers* (no Faith, nor Integrity!) *without even natural Affection, implacable, unmerciful* *.—
Melancholy and aſtoniſhing Deſcription of that corrupted State! enough to make the Ears of every one that hears it tingle. But

* Rom. i. 21, & ſeq.

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this is not all; there is a worse Circumstance still behind: *Who, knowing the Judgment of God (that they who commit such things are worthy of Death), not only do the same, but have Pleasure in those that do them.* It was not enough, it seems, to sin with an high Hand themselves against plain Knowledge, and the clear Dictates of Conscience, but they must propagate their Vices, make Profelytes to their abominable Practices, and place their great Pleasure and Satisfaction in making others as bad and corrupted as themselves.—This is the Text—My Observation from it shall be this; *viz.*

—That it is the highest Aggravation of Wickedness, and, of all others, the worst Symptom in a corrupted Nation, to commit Iniquity against plain and clear Knowledge, and to be eager and studious in its Propagation.—The Apostle here closes the most shocking Description, that one can imagine, of the Immorality of the *Romans*, by this very aggravating Circumstance, *That, knowing, &c.*—Now this, I say, and I speak it by *St. Paul's* Authority, is Wickedness in its highest

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highest Character and Complexion, and one of the worst Symptoms that can appear in the Body of a corrupted Nation.

First, Because it is the most outrageous Insolence, and a sort of Defiance of the Justice and Government of God Almighty, and seems to bespeak a very signal and speedy Punishment.

It is aggravating more than enough to sin against plain Knowledge, and the clear Informations of our Conscience, and, without any Consideration of the Power and Majesty of God, of the Honour of his Government, of the Authority and Reasonableness of his Laws, to neglect and despise them, and to violate the sacred Obligations of Morality, and the repeated Injunctions of our Blessed Saviour, by constant and habitual Practice.—But to proceed farther still in Iniquity; *not only to do these Things ourselves, but to have Pleasure in those that do them.*—To lend our Hearts, and our Hands, and our Example, to the furtherance of this accursed Work;—this must needs, in

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a peculiar Manner, provoke the Displeasure of God Almighty, and call down the Vengeance of his Justice on us. The Honour of his Laws, and the Majesty of his Government, require that such a rebellious Spirit as this should be very signally corrected.

It is the Method of God's Providence, and perfectly suitable to the Justice and Goodness of his Nature, in his Dealings with the Nations of the Earth, to try all possible Means of Repentance, by gentle Reproof, by Instruction, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, to awaken Sinners to their Duty; and when all proves ineffectual, he appeals to Man himself, whether Punishment is not the proper Remedy.

*O Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and Men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my Vineyard; What could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth Grapes, brought it forth wild Grapes *?*

* Isai. v. 3, 4.

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If all the gentle Methods of Cultivation will not make Men better, nothing but Punishment and Amputation can be expected.

It shews a most desperate and inveterate Spirit of Wickedness in a Nation, to withstand all the Methods of God's Grace, and to grow rather worse by his Mercy. If the Prophets understood the Matter, nothing is a more sure Forerunner of God's Judgements, than such a Spirit as the Apostle has reproved here in the *Gentiles*.

It seems, it was sometimes stirring in the *Jewish* State; who, as knowing as they were, were yet rather more wicked than other People, not only doing the things that were abominable, but taking Pleasure in those that did them.

They have chosen their own Ways, says God, and their Soul delighteth in their Abomination: I will also chuse their Delusions, and (since they will have it so) they shall be filled with the Fruit of their own Doings.*

* Isai. lxvi. 3, 4.

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The Prophet *Jeremy* gives a very observable bad Character of them; for he tells us expressly, that they were arrived at such a prodigious Pitch of Iniquity, that they lost one of the best Restraints of their Virtue, even their natural Modesty. *They were not ashamed, neither could they blush **

Shall not I visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this †?

Return ye now every one from his evil Way, and make your Ways and your Doings good.— This was the Condescension of God's Mercy; but hear the Answer of an obstinate and rebellious Spirit: *And they said there is no Hope; but we will walk after our own Devices, and we will every one do the Imagination of his evil Heart ‡.—* Now all these Things happened unto them for Ensamples, and they are written for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come §. *We are sure that the Judgment of God is accord-*

* Jer. vi. 15.

‡ Jer. xviii. 11, 12.

† Jer. v. 9.

§ 1 Cor. x. 11.

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*ing, to Truth, against them which commit such Things * : For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful Looking-for of Judgment †.*

Reason, and Scripture, and History, agree in this, That there are certain Times when the Iniquities of Nations are full, when the Patience of God has had her perfect Work, and when they are ripe for Destruction; and, assuredly, their Time must be drawing on apace, and the Measure of their Iniquity be swollen to a great Degree, who not only practise all the Ways of Immorality, without Restraint, or Modesty, or Moderation, but *take Pleasure in those that do them*;—are delighted with Men that follow their bad Examples, and endeavour to diffuse the Spirit of Wickedness among all around them.

But, *Secondly*, Not to insist upon the Judgments of God, which are far above out

* Rom. ii. 2.

† Heb. x. 26, 27.

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of our Sight, and, through his infinite Patience, are not executed speedily against every evil Work, I observe farther, that such a Spirit of Immorality as this, that is not content with the Practice of Wickedness itself, but *takes Pleasure* to propagate and diffuse its Influence, is one of the surest Arguments of a declining Nation, and does *naturally* pave the Way to its Destruction.

The Reason of it is as clear as the Sun; for, had God himself never interposed, and our Blessed Saviour never appeared in the World to sanctify and encourage Goodness, yet it is absolutely impossible for any Society to maintain itself, but upon the Principles of Morality and Virtue.

And therefore it is a very lamentable thing, and ought to alarm Christians exceedingly, for the Honour of God, for the Credit of their holy Religion, for the Welfare of their common Country, when they see these important Principles contemned and trampled on; when they see the general Bent of a People giving their united Vote

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in Favour of Vice and Wickedness, delighting themselves in the Spirit of them, and with an eager Pleasure encouraging, applauding, and rewarding, every Attempt to propagate them.

What can be expected from such a dangerous Disposition as this, especially when it appears to be almost national and general, but that the Bands of Government must be loosened, all Peace and Order destroyed, Authority and Magistracy despised and rendered ineffectual, and the best of Men made a Prey to the Injustice, the Violence, the Excesses, the Lewdness, of the worst?

Before the old *Roman* Government had its Period, the Signs of its Destruction were long foreseen, in the corrupt Manners of the People. It is mentioned, and by some believed, to the Honour of the Emperor *Augustus*, that, when he had established the public Tranquillity, he was for some Time in suspense, whether he should restore the *Romans* to their Liberties, or not. But, upon mature Deliberation, he found
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the thing impracticable: They were so corrupted by a long Civil War, so torn to Pieces by the Workings of inveterate Factions, and so licentious in their Manners, as to be incapable of being governed by fixed Laws, or restrained in any tolerable Order, but by absolute and arbitrary Power. It may pass for an invariable Truth in the political Survey of Nations, that when they are destined to be undone, or lose their Liberties, the Seeds of their Destruction are first seen in the profligate Manners of their Members: And, if so, let any Man of Goodness and Understanding judge, whether we ought not to dread the Consequence of that Corruption of all Kinds, that now so generally prevails amongst us.—But, not to confine ourselves to the Fate of any particular Country, we may ransack History in every Language of the Earth, and turn over all the Volumes of Polity and Government, we shall find at last that it is impossible for any People to maintain their Ground, but by supporting the Fear and Reverence of God, and upholding the Majesty of Religion; for Government can subsist no other-
wise

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wife than upon the Principles of Order, and Peace, and Justice, and a Sobriety and Temperance in the Morals of all its Members.

We are prodigiously alarmed at any thing that affects our Peace immediately, and exceeding studious we are to put a Stop to any direct Attempts upon it : As if a Rebellion against our Government (though, in truth, of the most interesting Consequence) was of greater Moment to us than such an avowed Rebellion against God ! — Against God ? — Such a Spirit of Wickedness, as I am speaking of, is an *immediate* Rebellion against Government : For what is Government, when the People are taught to be immoral both by Writings and Example ; when all Reverence of God is neglected, when the Majesty of Religion is itself struck at, and its most sacred and affecting Sanctions forgot or weakened ; when Sobriety and Frugality and Temperance of Life are, as it were, put under public Ridicule and Censure, and the lowest of Men encouraged in the Imitation of the Excesses and Lewdness of the highest ? — I say, when
such

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such a Spirit of Wickedness as this possesses the Minds, and is seen to actuate a People—what is Government? Where is the Authority of the Magistrate? To what Purpose do we preach, and do ye believe? Of what Importance is it, and how weak will it be to oppose, with Arguments drawn from Reason and Scripture, such a Torrent as this? To what End is it to talk of the Fear of God, of the Authority of our Blessed Saviour, the Excellency of our Religion, and the Importance of another Life? To what Purpose do we recommend Justice, Good-nature, Industry, Contentedness, and a Sobriety of Life and Manners, as the best social Virtues, and the very Foundation of our present Happiness? We may press these things from the Pulpit, and they will be borne with there, as the proper Business of the Day, and Place they come from; but the Impression, if any, is made in Sand, and the Characters wrote in Dust, to be blown away by the Wind. For, alas! what signify such Arguments as these to People intoxicated with Vice, whose natural Dispositions are corrupted, whose Minds are darkened,

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whose Ears shut, and whose Consciences are feared against all such good and friendly Admonitions, by the officious Pains and mischievous Example of those, who not only practise the worst Immoralities themselves, but *take Pleasure in those that do them*, and maintain and cherish this Spirit of Confusion in its full Life and Vigour? It is an Argument of a very desperate Temper in Men, and shews that their public Virtue is fallen exceeding low, when they appear so cordially in the Interest of Vice.

We of this present Generation may perhaps not live to see the Ruin of our Country; but this is very certain, that the Loss of our public Virtue is an undoubted Mark of its Approach; and, however it may fare with us, poor Posterity may feel the Smart of it, and perhaps curse the Memory of us their Ancestors, for setting such a destructive Example in our Dispositions, and the Conduct of our Lives.

And this is more particularly to be feared and lamented by all wise and sober Men,
when

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when they observe this deadly Contagion, this affectionate Love of Wickedness in a Nation, not to be confined to the lower Orders of Men, but to spread its Infection among those of Rank and Character.

Where the Vulgar only is infected (wicked and ignorant as they are, too often by Education, by their Business, and by their Conversation), Authority and Prudence, and Instruction may restore them: But what Room is left to reform their Manners, when Authority and Example is, as it were, gone over to their Party, and they can plead the Sanction of their worst and most mischievous Vices from the Applause and Encouragement of the Great?

This, assuredly, (where-ever the Case happens) is an Instance of a People being thoroughly corrupted in their Manners, when Men of high Characters, of the best Education, most improved Understandings, and most enlightened Knowledge, seem (as to any Regards to Virtue and Religion) to be upon the Level with the lowest and most abandoned,

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abandoned, and exactly in the mean, and fordid, and shameful Sentiments of the very Dregs of the People.—*Ah sinful Nation ! a People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of evil Doers : The whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart is faint : From the Sole of the Foot, even unto the Head, there is no Soundness in it, but Wounds and Bruises, and putrifying Sores * : A general Rottenness and Corruption of Manners. Thus it was in the Roman State, when the Apostle gave the Description of it, and finished the mortifying Picture by this aggravating Stroke, that, knowing the Judgment of God, &c.*

What has been hitherto said, was suggested to my Mind from the public Character, which I read to you out of Scripture, of an ancient and most illustrious People.

I would to God, I had found myself at a Loss for a particular Application, and that I had been forced to have strained my Invention, to have sent my Thoughts abroad, or to have searched into the Records of Antiquity, to have made or found a national

* Isai. i. 4, &c.

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Character parallel to this, which is drawn of the *Romans* by the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*.—But the Pains of Enquiry were needless, and my first Thoughts furnished me with too much Matter, and too ready an Application to ourselves, and our own Concerns; and it was not possible for me to fix my Eyes upon the Original, without being struck and startled at the Exactness of the Copy.—But this perhaps will not be easily allowed; and I shall be asked, why these gloomy Reflections, this hard Satire on our native Country? And where are to be discerned those Marks of Decay and Ruin in it, which can at all support its Comparison to this, now extinguished, Nation? Our public Happiness is apparent, and as well secured as possible by the Arts of human Prudence; our established Religion, in Profession, wise and reasonable, and truly Christian; the Constitution of our State admirably calculated for the Support of a free and manly Government, and the Execution of it in the Hands of a good King, by Inclination and Nature the Parent of his Country; our People are free,

our

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our Laws wise, our Property safe, our Commerce flourishing, our Strength formidable, our Riches prodigious.—Now all this is very true; but still this beautiful Structure of our Commonwealth, of so goodly outward Appearance, may be unsafe in its main Foundation; and most unquestionably is so, if our People are abandoned in their Morals, the Objects of Divine Displeasure, undeserving and forsaken of the good Providence of God; for, in that dangerous and doubtful Situation, neither the best Magistrates, nor the best Laws, nor the largest Supply of Wealth, nor the most superior Power, can long support us. Under a virtuous Administration of things, indeed, when Religion and Integrity have their proper Influence, These are the great Bulwarks of Society: But, on the contrary, if Men, with so many Encouragements and Opportunities of doing better, will grow worse and more degenerate in their Practices, and, like the *Roman* People here referred to, in the Pride and Fulness of Prosperity, will not only commit those things that are worthy of Death, *but take Pleasure*

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in those that do them, and propagate every Vice that can be named, and some that ought not, by the contagious Enchantment of bad Example; these very advantageous Circumstances may become the Occasion of more speedy Ruin: For Wealth, and Law, and Power, in the Hands of Wickedness, are very dangerous Instruments of Mischief; and such is the poisonous Nature of Vice and Immorality, that they can convert the natural Means of Health and Felicity, both in public and private Life, into certain Disease and Death.

There was a Time, when the Inhabitants of this famous Island had the Character of a sober and virtuous People, and of having Dispositions very well turned to receive so good a Religion as the Christian is; but those Excellencies seem to be departing from us; our natural Tempers are corrupted; and, by imitating none of the best of our Neighbours, in some of the worst of their Qualities, we seem, for some Years, to have been running apace into all the foolish and hurtful Vices, which Irreligion and Vanity,
and

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and Perfidy, and unbounded Licentiousness, can teach us; and that very Liberty (which, rightly treated, is in natural Friendship and Alliance with true Religion and the Public Weal) we abuse, and prostitute most vilely to every Purpose of Faction and Immorality; as if we were studious to shew, that Liberty is a Blessing too good for us, and that our Minds are too low and sordid to enjoy so gracious and so divine a Privilege. But, to speak the Truth, and not heighten our Disease by disguising it, the Virtue of our Nation is most apparently in a declining State; Religion has lost its Power on the Heart, and, by the most natural Consequence, things every Day proceed from bad to worse; Magistracy is contemned, Dignity and Order sunk to the common Level; Adultery and vagrant Uncleannefs is become an epidemical Evil; and, by the shameless Practice, the good Ends of God's Institution are defeated; the Numbers of the People are diminished; opulent and noble Families undone; our Children are ungovernable; our Servants extravagant, idle, and unfaithful. Intemperance, as habitual as general,

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debilitates and spoils the Strain of the People; the public Peace is disquieted; daily Robberies interrupt the Repose of the City and the Country, and (O! Shame to Government!), Murder itself is frequently committed in the Streets of this great Capital, almost under the Seat and Throne of Magistracy.—But thus it will be, in spite of Laws, and in spite of the Sword of Justice, till we bethink ourselves a little seriously, begin a Reformation every Man on himself and in his own Family, increase the Power, and support the Majesty of true Religion, preserve the Order and Dignity of social Life, and lay the Foundation of better Times in the prudent Education of our Children, and the wise Government of our Servants.—And, with regard to our Christianity, and the awful and awakening Interests dependent on it, the plain Truth is, we must either mend our Manners, or our very Profession of it will become a Jest.—We are sometimes apt, in a good Mood, to value ourselves upon our Religion, talk of being Protestants, and reformed from the Errors of a corrupted Church:

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Church : It is well :—But, whatever Errors we have forsaken, if we do not amend our Lives, our worst Errors will be still behind ; and (bating the frightful Zeal of Persecution, the Complexion of Popish Piety) a sober and regular, though weak and deluded, *Romanist* is a Character preferable to a loose and immoral *Protestant*, in all the Pride of his Liberty and Knowledge. For it will be a terrible Charge upon us, and our Sins will rise up in Judgment with most provoking Aggravation, that we went beyond other People in Wickedness as well as Knowledge, continued in our Sins in spite of the clearest Instruction and best Religion, and, though *knowing*, &c.

We are now called upon by the Voice of Authority, concurring with the Sense of every sober and thinking Man in the Kingdom, to examine our Consciences, consider our Ways, and, in a just Conviction of our superlative Wickedness, to humble ourselves before the Throne of Mercy, to promise future Amendment, and deprecate the Wrath of a justly-offended Deity.—The

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Vials of his Anger have not yet been poured out, but some Drops of his Indignation have fallen on us, the Preludes, perhaps, and Forerunners, if not timely prevented, of a sweeping and destroying Storm. The Life of our excellent King has been struck at, our Country wasted, and the Blood of our Fellow-Subjects spilt, by the Sons of Rapine; its Honour and Credit prostituted to our worst and most inveterate Enemy; and the very Being of our Laws and Constitution (the Basis of our Property and Freedom for half a Century) threatened to be overturned and cancelled.—But it has pleased God to redeem us from these dreadful Evils, and to work a Deliverance for us, as sudden and surprising as our Danger was.—But, for all this, *his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is stretched out still** —The Terrors of a foreign Enemy surround us, and even our domestic ones are conquered indeed, but not dispirited; their Rage is turned into Despair, their Insolence is increased, they despise and reject the Mercy of the Government, plainly shew-

* Isai. v. 25.

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ing that they have secret Resources of Hope, and only wait the favourable Opportunity of some fatal Disaster to our Arms, or Breach in our Alliances (which God avert, in his Mercy), to rise up and finish the Ruin of their native Country. Add to this the very grievous Pestilence, which for a long Time has wasted, and continues to diminish a most useful and important part of our Property, which baffles all our Skill, and defies every Experiment to remedy, and may, possibly, end in a Contagion still more fatal to us, and depopulate our City, as this does our Fields and Pastures.—These things added together, the furious Despair, the Perfidy and Boldness of our Enemies at Home, the Spirit and Success of those Abroad, a destroying Murrain preying upon the Vitals of our Country, and the little Prospect that is seen of a Reformation in our Lives and Manners, evidently shew, that our Evils are but suspended; that God has still a Controversy with us, and that nothing can assure us of the Divine Favour and Protection, or of any Stability to our fluctuating Affairs, but Consideration, and a sober Mind, and
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breaking off our Unrighteousness by Repentance. God alone determines the Fate of Nations, who destroys or builds them up, according to his good Pleasure; but, his immediate Interposition apart, Reason and Revelation, and Experience, confirm this Truth to us, that Public Virtue is Public Prosperity, and Ruin inseparably annexed to Vice; and therefore, under the Blessing of the Divine Assistance, if we would preserve our Country, and deliver our Religion and Laws in any Degree of Safety to Posterity, we must set about the Work by a serious and sincere Reformation:—Compared to this, the Arts of human Policy, the Councils in the Courts of Princes, are weak and short-sighted, and the Execution of the best digested Schemes precarious, and of most uncertain Issue; but the Public Virtue of a Nation, blessed by the Providence of God, is Strength invincible, and Wisdom not to be controuled.—Let this Day then begin this general Duty, and let it be exemplified by every Man in himself and in his Family. Religion is much the Subject of our Enquiry and Conversation: Let it reach and

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animate the Heart, as well as exercise the Tongue and Understanding. Nothing shews so much the Wisdom of a Man, in every Circumstance of Life, *from him that weareth Purple and a Crown, unto him that is clothed with a Linen Frock* *, as a Rectitude of Life and Manners; and, after all our boasting of Love and Regard to our Country, he is the best Citizen, who is the best Man, both in his public and his private Character.

To this Care of our Moral and Christian Conduct, let us add a wise and well-governed Zeal for our Government; let us study the Value of our Laws; let us remember how much Blood and Treasure they cost our wise and good Fathers, to gain and to preserve them to us their Children, and let us hold them fast against every Attempt of Tyranny and absolute Dominion. We have a watchful and an envious Neighbour near us, who, for some Years, not content with draining the Blood of his own Country, and sacrificing the Lives of half his Subjects to a wanton and lawless Ambition, is medi-

* Ecclesi. xl. 4.

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tating the same Chains for *Europe*; and yet the Cruelty of his Designs is far short of their Perfidy;—for such is his shameless Breach of Treaties, as is not to be parallel'd in ancient Story, no, though you look into the Annals of his own Predecessors. We, though at a distance, have a feeling Evidence of this, and a Share more than enough in the Calamities, which this domineering Power has occasioned round him. What a Profusion of Treasure! What a licentious Waste of the Lives of innocent Men! What an hated Form of Government, where the Caprice and Ambition of one Man depopulates whole Countries! Let this Reflection, and this painful Feeling, teach us the Value of our own Constitution; let us hold it fast till we die, and guard against every Attempt to destroy it, whether it be by open Force, or the slower, but more effectual, Methods of Deceit and Corruption. One is afraid of the very Commerce and Correspondence with such a Nation; there is a Danger in it greater, perhaps, than from their Enmity—The Vanity, the Looseness, the Perfidy, the Libertinism, the
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abject and fawning Manners of this People, tend to spoil the Spirits of Men, and to break them gradually to an unmanly Government: It behoves us to be on our Guard, that our Connections with them do not debauch and hurt us;—Connections which, of late Years, have insensibly gained Ground upon us, whether arising from the expensive and idle Curiosity of Travel, or from the Correspondence of a Trade, hurtful to us, but a rich Mine to them; or from retaining Servants of that Country and Religion in our Families, to the unkind and undeserved Reproach of our own People; or from a slavish Fondness for their Language, unbecoming the Freedom and Grandeur of the *British* Nation; or a Love to their fantastic Fashions.—Whatever be the Reason of our Attachments, it is highly necessary to break loose from them, especially as we see ourselves surrounded with faithless and domestic Enemies, who, for their own shameless Purposes, are lavish in the Praises of this People, study to conciliate our Minds to them, and to introduce their Scheme of Government,

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ment; who, supported by their infamous Alliance, try every Method to distress, and harrafs, and enslave their own free and happy Country.

Despotic Government, founded in Hereditary Right, where one Man's Will is every Man's Misery, is not more mischievous than it is absurd.—There is Reason, and Spirit, and Liberty in Law, and it is not only essential to every Man's Property, but, without it, there can be no such thing as Virtue or Religion in the World.

If our Constitution is so valuable, how much more is our Religion? And how inseparable is that and the Happiness of our Country? I speak of it now chiefly in Opposition to Popery, the strange and alarming spreading of which is our greatest and most immediate Danger. No Nation (speaking in the gross) can possibly be happy and flourishing under *Popery*, because the Influence of it is of so baneful a Nature, that it does not only sink the Spirits of Men, damp the Vigour and Life of Industry, stop every

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Avenue to religious Knowledge from the Scriptures, make Princes Tyrants, and their People Slaves, but it in a manner countermines the Wisdom and Goodness of Providence, and converts (as it has done in fact) the most beautiful and fertile Country into a desolate Wilderness. And therefore, when we set down to recollect ourselves, and recover our ancient Character of a sober and good-natured, and religious People, let it be our principal Care to avoid the Contagion of this bad, this absurd, and, from its mischievous Spirit, I must call it, this unchristian Religion: For *Popery*, as a fine Writer expresses it, “ is really an Usurpation upon
“ Christianity, and, like Usurpers, lives with-
“ in its Guards, Inquisitors, and Dragoons;
“ it settles and supports itself by Gibbets,
“ Axes, Halters, Fire and Sword, and all
“ the Instruments of Death and cruel Execution.”

Whatever Sense we have of Liberty, whatever just Notion of Religion, whatever is left of the Spirit of Christianity amongst us, we have it from an Establishment founded

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ed upon Scripture, and the purest Ages, maintained in a Spirit of Toleration; but, if we suffer ourselves to be ensnared by *Po-pery*, and submit to its cruel and imperious Dictates, the Dye is cast, and we may easily be undone beyond Redemption. Nothing therefore imports us more, than to watch the Workings of these bold insinuating People, the *Romish* Missionaries. How long shall we bear with these inquiet and meddling Spirits, who are not only troublesome, but pernicious to us; deluding silly Women, spiriting away the Children of the Nation, or tainting their first Principles? Captivating the Poor by their venal Charity, and seducing the Profligate by fallacious Promises of Heaven, by virtue of their counterfeit Reliques, and the Intercession of such Saints, as either never existed, or deserved to be the Scorn and Scandal of the Times they lived in? Is there no End of their Avarice and Thirst of Power? And must this free and wealthy Nation submit for ever to have its Peace interrupted and endangered, its Treasure drained, and its Subjects debauched from

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from their natural Allegiance, by these foreign Plunderers, these Sons of Darkneſs, who lurk in the thieviſh Corners of the Streets, and put on every Garb and every Character to work their infernal Purpoſes; braving our Laws and Magiſtrates, and, in their gloomy midnight Cabals, contriving Schemes of moſt deſtructive Treafon?—
*These peſtilent People are about our Houſe, and about our Bed, and ſpy out all our Ways;—they enter, by one Means or other, into our inmoſt Recesses:—They are like the Plague deſcribed by Moſes; They go up and come into our Houſes, and into our Bed-chambers, and upon our Beds, and into the Houſes of our Servants, and upon our People **, and, in different Diſguiſes, overſpread the Face of the Camp, the City, and the Country.

The Religion which theſe People are ſo ſtudious to propagate, conſidered merely as ſuch, is as baſe as it is abſurd, and deſerves the Scorn and Contempt of Proteſtants; but that which makes it the Terror of all

* Exod. viii. 3.

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good Men, the Hatred of all wise and humane Princes, the Misery of every Country where it is established, is that furious Spirit of Cruelty, which is inseparably blended and wrought into the Roman Polity, and which distinguishes the Papal Government from every other in the World.—Other Governments have been instituted, however administered, for the Good and Preservation of Men ; but the Papal one, supported by Torture and Inquisition, is planned for, and subsists by, the Misery and Destruction of them, and is a settled and habitual Conspiracy against all the Princes in the World.—This was the Opinion of our wise Forefathers ; This they felt severely, This we feel in some Degree ; by This our Neighbour Protestants suffer daily ; and yet, by some Fascination, we seem inclined to believe, that Popery is become a mild and good-natured thing.—Some of us even apologize for it, and plead for its Toleration ; though every Native of *England*, who is lifted into this detestable Society and Mission, is a Rebel to his Country's Laws, and a Traitor to the good King that governs us.

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The Success therefore of the *Romish* Missionaries, if it goes on as it does at present, in this deluded Country, may be looked upon as the last, the most avenging Scourge of Heaven;—the Chastisement of a devoted People, who have filled up the Measure of their Iniquities.—This Judgment suspended, if our Public Virtue decays, we may recover it.—If Commotions arise at Home, Wisdom and Moderation of Government may reduce things into Order.—If our Constitution is corrupted and hurt, our Legislature can redress and mend it.—But if *Popery* once more lords it over us, there is an End of our Nation, our Honour, our Freedom, our Prosperity, our Virtue; and it will be an happy Circumstance if our Name too be extinguished.

Lastly, Let us remember, that, next under God, Union at Home, and Loyalty and Affection to the King and his Royal Family, are our great and sure Defence.—We have seen, God be thanked, that Danger, at a perilous Crisis, can unite us, and our Union save us; and why should not our common Interest at all Times do the same? We are

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Brethren by Blood, by Country, by Religion; why do we strive one against another, and, by our foolish Divisions, open the Door to an Enemy, that we are more than a Match for, when united?—The main Strength of our Neighbour Nation is their Union, whether it arises from the Power and Policy of the Court, or the Affections of the Subject; and our Division is our Weakness. Strange Folly and Inconstancy! which does not only expose us to the Wiles and Frauds, and Arms of that powerful, restless, and intriguing Nation, but even to their Scorn and Derision.—To see a People, blessed beyond a Parallel with the best Climate, the safest Situation, the most extensive and profitable Commerce, the wisest Laws, and the best-natured Princes, and the Establishment of a divine Religion, sacrificing all these Advantages to, or, as we have felt, endangering them by the little Resentments of Party, the narrow, ungenerous Views of Pride and Ambition, and private Avarice.—Will no History, will no Experience make us wiser? Has not this very Mischief ruined many great and mighty Nations? Is it not true to a Proverb, from
the

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the Mouth of our Saviour himself, *than an House divided against itself cannot stand?* And has not this same Misconduct weakened our national Power for a long Series of Years, and brought us more than once, in our Memories, upon the Brink of Destruction?—Our Enemies indeed were mistaken lately in their Opinion of us; they found us united, when they looked for a Civil War; but what Mischief have we brought upon ourselves, by giving them Room and Occasion for such foolish Presumption?—They are now returned to their Country with a Conviction, that the King has the Hearts of his Subjects; his Royal Goodness gives him a Title to them, and will preserve them loyal to the last Period of his Life. He enjoys his Crown by clear and indisputable Inheritance, by the Sanction of Laws, by the Consent, and with the Applause of a great Nation, and uses his Power and Royalty, as becomes a King, that is, as a Trust for the Public Good.—Under his Shadow we may sit down safely; and, if we are not wanting in our Duty to God, if we preserve Integrity of Manners, love and honour, and

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practise our Holy Religion, support our free and legal Government, shut the Door against the Wiles and Force of *Poper*y, and put a speedy End to those hateful Divisions (which spoil the Comfort of our Lives, defeat us of the Enjoyment of all our natural Advantages, and tend directly to our Dissolution), if we do all this, in Time, we shall be as happy as this World can make Men, and our Government will be as free and independent, and impregnable, as the God of Nature has made the Situation of our Island.

A S E R-

A
S E R M O N

Preached before His GRACE

CHARLES Duke of *Richmond*,
Lenox, and *Aubigny*,

P R E S I D E N T;

AND THE

G O V E R N O R S

OF THE

LONDON INFIRMARY,

AT THE

Parish-Church of *St. Lawrence-Jewry*,

On *Tuesday, March 3^d, 1747.*

U. S. N. O. 11

CHIEF OF BUREAU

NAVY DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT

NAVY DEPARTMENT

NAVY DEPARTMENT

NAVY DEPARTMENT

NAVY DEPARTMENT

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MATTHEW, Chap. vi. Part of the
19th and 20th Verses.

*Lay not up for yourselves Treasures
upon Earth----But lay up for
yourselves Treasures in Heaven.*

THERE is hardly a Doctrine in Religion, that is more unsuitable to the general Taste and Inclination of the World, than this of our Saviour, which I have read to you. Practice and Prejudice bear so strong against it, and the Treasures of the Earth have such a prodigious Interest in the Hearts and Affections of Men, that, were it not for the Authority and Wisdom of its Author (who never spake any thing in vain), one might be discouraged from attempting to explain and enforce a Precept, where there is so little Hope of being heard with any Attention or Regard—or, if perhaps Custom and Curiosity will afford us an Hearing,

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ing, yet, when That is over, so is all the good Effect of it, and Men settle again into the same wrong Notions which they brought with them ; and it is thought by some an Answer sufficient to all that can be said in Discouragement of an avaricious Temper, from the Instructions of the Gospel—That such Doctrine is not suited to the present State of Things—That it is old-fashioned and out of Date—That Times are much changed, since it was uttered, and Christians are now in a Condition, not of denying themselves the good things of Life, but of accumulating and enjoying as much of them as they can—As if the Authority and Wisdom of our Saviour's Precepts were to be answered by Ridicule ; and as if he had uttered what he had not thoroughly weighed and considered, and his Words, which were to last when Heaven and Earth shall pass away, were suited only to the Observance of Men in that Time and Age, in which he lived.—Whereas every thing he spake, was, from the largest Comprehension of Mind, and by the Authority of GOD himself ; from having seen the Hearts, and
 confi-

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considered all the Ways of Men; and therefore his Doctrine is to last for ever, untouched by Time, and unaltered by Custom.

And, with regard to the particular Precepts of the Text, though Riches are become the principal Objects of our Desires and Attainments, and are called, in the Phrase of Commendation, the Life of Trade and Ingenuity—the Vigour of the Laws—the Bulwark of the State—the Supports of Learning and Philosophy—the Ornaments of Civil Life—the Blessings of Heaven, and the only things which keep this busy World in Motion—Notwithstanding all this, and admitting the Panegyric in some Sense to be true, our Saviour's Words, if rightly understood, as grounded on Matters of Fact, and affecting Individuals, will contain very just, and prudent, and good Advice to Us; for they were not intended to kill the Spirit of Industry, to confound Society, to introduce a wild uncultivated Life, or to create an Indolence and Insensibility in
Men,

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Men, as to the Prosperities and Comforts, and Ornaments of human Nature—The Reason of things, the Methods of Providence, the Order of the World, the Scriptures themselves, are against this sour and furly *Stoicism*; but then they prescribe to us a Temper and Moderation in the Acquirement and Use of Riches; and nothing can be more kind and friendly to us than our Saviour's Doctrine, that we take care that they do not engross our Hearts and Affections, or carry us to commit Actions which are inconsistent with the Religion and Hopes of Christians; *Lay not up for Yourself Treasures upon Earth*; i. e. be not so intent upon these perishing things, as to neglect and forget those of infinitely greater Moment, but let your principal Care, and your most hearty Endeavours, attend and provide for Eternity—*Lay up for Yourself Treasures in Heaven.*

This is our Saviour's Advice; and I will observe to you the Prudence, and Wisdom, and Goodness of it to us.

First,

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First, From the Nature of those things, an inordinate Desire of which he discourages and forbids.

Secondly, From the vast Importance of that future Happiness, which he instructs us to make our main Care, and to give our principal Attention to, *Lay not up for Yourself Treasures upon Earth, &c.*

And, *First*, I say, and I hope to prove it, That there is the utmost Wisdom and Kindness in our Saviour's Advice to us, because Riches in themselves, and considered as affecting Individuals are not of that Importance to us which we imagine—Sure I am, they are far from being essential to human Happiness; or, properly speaking, of themselves, the Materials of it—They are, indeed, things of great and splendid Expectation; and, while we have them not, we fancy that every thing that is happy goes along with them—But, alas! Possession is a very different thing from Expectation; and the Rich would own this Truth, if they had Ingenuity enough to speak their Minds
upon

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upon the Experiment—Riches, like all other human things, pall in the Possession; and when once a Man has gratified his vain Desires, and accumulated great Store of Wealth, he finds, to his Cost and Regret, that he can enjoy no more of it than is sufficient to the few natural Wants of an human Creature; and all, beyond That, either loses its Relish, or becomes troublesome and dangerous to its Owner. And this is the Reason that Persons, in the most affluent Circumstances, are often so *contemptible* to others, and so *irksome* and *uneasy* to themselves, having obtained more Wealth than they can use with Decency and Credit, and pursued wrong Measures to Happiness. These are they, who, in their own Examples, prove the Truth of the wise Man's Observation *, *That there are Men to whom God hath given Riches and Wealth, so that they want nothing for their Souls, of all that they desire, yet God giveth them not Power to eat thereof, to relish and enjoy it.—This is Vanity, and it is an evil Disease*—It is a Disease, but a Disease in the Understanding, and proves

* Eccles. v. 19.

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the Justness of the Philosopher's Observation; that many Men, by growing rich, do not cure, but only change their Uneasinesses; for the Fault was not, as they imagined, in their Circumstances, but in their Understandings. It does not only betray a Want of Religion and true Philosophy, but weak and childish Ignorance, not to see, that the Happiness of the Man is the Temper of his Mind, a virtuous and contented Spirit, arising from an innocent Conscience, and a constant Tenour of good Works; and our Saviour and his Apostles, by the Contempt which they have thrown upon Riches, were not singular in preaching this unquestionable Doctrine, that the Happiness of human Life does not depend entirely upon the things without us. It was also the Doctrine of the Philosophers. *Seneca* declaimed at his Ease; and it had come better from his Mouth, if he had been as poor as *Epietetus*; but it was not one of the Rants of *Stoicism*, when he observes, " That the poor Man (not speaking in Ex-
 " tremes) is oftener and more sincerely
 " chearful than the rich one, having a good
 " Heart, and no Disquiet and Reproaches

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“ from within ; whereas either the Cheer-
 “ fulness of the other is affected, or else he
 “ is directly sad and melancholy, which sets
 “ the heavier upon him too ;” *Quia interdum*
non licet esse palam miserum, sed inter ærumnas
cor ipsum exedentes, necesse est agere felicem—
 Because, in some Circumstances, he is forced
 to deny himself the common Relief of the
 Discontented, viz. Complaint ; and, with
 Troubles upon his Mind, which strike to the
 very Heart of him, must personate an easy
 and happy Character. Another Reflection,
 which is not the worse, or less true for being
 common, is, that Riches, take them at their
 best, are things of most uncertain Duration.
 Now, if we would act, I will not say like
Christians, but like *Men*, in the Calculation
 of our Happiness, we should always make
 Provision, that it be as certain and durable
 as possible. In the matter of our Wealth, I
 am sure this is a main Article ; and infi-
 nitely solicitous we are to give our Estates
 all possible Security to Ourselves and our
 Posterity—But the Mischief is, all our Di-
 ligence upon this Point is confessedly vain
 and foolish ; for it is inconsistent with the
 Nature

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Nature of the things themselves, and the common Course of the World, that Riches should be of any long Duration—They may be taken from us by Violence, by Subtlety, or, if not so, in the common Change and Vicissitude of Affairs, they will make themselves Wings and fly away; for it is absolutely impossible to confine That, which, by its Nature and Use, is of a fluctuating and uncertain Continuance: * *The rich Man's Wealth* (the Wise Man observes) *is his strong City, and as an high Wall in his own Conceit*—But his Conceit is a very foolish one, for he sets his Eyes and his Heart upon That, which is not—upon That, which is not, and cannot be of any long Duration; for one of these things must happen in a little Time: Either he will leave his Riches, or they will leave him; so that nothing can more misbecome a Man, or be of more Danger to the Welfare of a Christian; of an immortal Soul, and born for Eternity, than to spend all his Care and Pains and Time, in heaping up Riches (not so much for himself, as those whom he leaves behind him), when they are so incompetent to our

* Prov. xviii. 11.

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Happiness—For, in truth, though a Man has never so much of them, he cannot properly be said to *possess* them; for he must leave them to the Care and Fidelity of others—He cannot have them always in his Hands, nor always in his Sight; and this Consideration still increases their Uncertainty, because (in spite of all our Care), Fraud, or Force, or Time, in many Respects, will steal them from us—And this is a Reason which our Saviour himself lays a Stress upon—*Lay not up for yourselves Treasures on Earth, where Rust and Moth corrupt the perishable things; and Thieves break through, and steal those that are not so.* One Way indeed there is of disappointing even Time and Chance, of securing to Ourselves the Possession of our Estates, and making them properly our own, and that is, by doing Good with them, by distributing to the Necessities of others, being rich towards God; and, as our Saviour here expresses it, *Laying up for ourselves Treasures in Heaven.* Considering therefore the Nature of the things themselves, the fluctuating Course of the World,
and

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and the Changes that Power, and Fraud, and Time, are continually making in it, nothing can be wiser than *Solomon's Instruction* *, *Labour not to be rich: Cease from thine own Wisdom*, thy worldly and short-sighted Wisdom: And nothing more proper and emphatical, than the Reason which he gives for it; *For why wilt thou set thine Eyes upon That, which is not?* Upon That, which is of so uncertain and changing a Nature, that you can hardly name the Time in which it may be said to continue or endure at all—How mean and improper an Object, therefore, for the great and capacious Soul of Man, whom God designed for Immortality, and made him an Image of his own Eternity!

Another Consideration, which may serve to cure, or moderate, our Fondness for an Excess of Wealth, arises from the Difficulties and Dangers which attend it; I mean the Dangers to our Innocence and Virtue, which affect us much more seriously, than those which touch our Lives; and that,

* Prov. xxiii. 4.

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whether we consider the getting, or the enjoying of a great Estate : For in the getting an Estate in every Profession, the Temptations and Opportunities of Injustice are so near us, stand so thick about us, and solicit us so strongly, and by such various Ways, that it is next to a Miracle if our Virtue escapes unhurt in such a dangerous Conflict ; especially, if we live in the Dregs of a corrupted Age, where Profuseness and Covetousness are predominant Vices, and Examples are always ready to justify the most unlawful Ways of Gain—It is exceeding difficult to avoid the greatest and most infamous Practices of Injustice, Oppression, Fraud, Deceit, Extortion, Uncharitableness ; for Virtue is seldom a Match for Avarice—but it is harder still to retain an unpolluted Conscience, if we are let into all the Secrets and Mysteries of Iniquity ; for in the present Situation of things, and as the World is now conducted, there are a thousand Ways of Fraud, which the Vulgar are not acquainted with ; and Men of Dexterity are arrived at such a Perfection in the Arts of Falsehood and Injustice, have so

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many secret and invifible Methods of Deceit, and can carry on and execute the moft gainful Projects in fuch a dark and unobferved Train of Bufinefs, that, in the Eyes of ordinary Obfervers (though God fees and fets a Mark upon their Steps), they fhall pafs for Men of great Integrity; whilft, at the bottom they thrive and prosper by the fouleft and moft infamous Practices, by circumventing the Innocent, and impofing upon, and pillaging the Ignorant and Unwary — And what, I would ask, can be more difficult, than for a Man, who is let into thefe dangerous Secrets, to preferve his Innocence, when he can gain fo much by the Lofs of it, and with fuch little Hazard to his Reputation? But, to wave this, and confider the more ordinary and old-fafhioned Ways of Trade and Bufinefs, it is prodigioufly difficult to be ftrongly bent upon raifing an Eftate, and not to exceed the Bounds of Innocence to accomplifh it — Or, if we are not notoriously guilty in that refpect, but keep clear, it may be, of the great and atrocious Sins, yet it is next to impoffible, but the Defire of encreafing our Circumftances, will engrofs

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too much of our Time and Affections, and call us off from That, which is our greatest and most valuable Concern, the Love of God, and the Interests of another Life — Upon which Account our Saviour (*who knew what was in Man*) has endeavoured to guard against Covetousness, for this very Reason, because, *where our Treasure is, there will our Hearts be also.*

And then, for the enjoying Riches when we have got them—That is usually thought the easiest Matter in the World; and if the covetous Man can but raise an Estate, he thinks it impossible but his Posterity must be wise enough to use and enjoy it—Whereas it really requires much better Parts to spend an Estate, than to get one—I mean, to spend it usefully, and honourably, and wisely—It requires an understanding Heart, and a well-poised Judgment, to become a great Estate—For to be made the Prey of Fools and Parasites; to squander it away in Madness, Gaming, and Intemperance; to be intoxicated with Pride, and, as I may say, perpetually drunk with Sensuality, no Man will

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will say, there is any thing commendable and creditable in This—Nothing is more infamous, more giddy and irrational, and more contrary to the wise and sober Deportment of a Christian Life—It is an admirable Figure, it must be owned, that the rich Man makes in the Gospel, and he has left behind him an excellent Character for Imitation, when all that is commemorated of him is, That he lived luxuriously and uncharitably; died, as it may seem, untimely; and had an expensive Funeral—a most pitiful and worthless Character! And yet it suits more Men than we are aware of. How imprudently do we act, and against all Experience, in imagining we make our Children *happy*, by leaving them *very rich*. Alas! if you have made no other Provision for their Happiness, and have not sown the Seeds of Virtue in their Minds, cultivated their Understandings, and broke their Passions to the Commands of Reason; in giving them Riches, you have only put Instruments of Mischief into the Hands of Madmen; and your Friends will live to see it, when you shall be no more, that all your

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Care and Pains, your Trouble and Solitude, your laborious Days and watchful Nights, the Forfeiture of your good Name, and Loss of all your Virtue, have only served to minister to the foolish and riotous Excesses of a thoughtless, and wicked, and ungrateful Child, who ridicules and insults your Memory, squanders away your Substance, and makes your Industry, and even your Tendernefs and Affection for him, the Jest of his loose Companions! *Solomon* has told us, That, after having been at great Pains and Cost in contriving, and purchasing, and settling every thing, that could contribute to the Support of his Throne, and to the Ornament of human Life — he set himself down to consider, to what Purpose all this Expence and Labour? And he was so far from being pleased, and satisfied in the Reflection, that he tells us, in a Strain of Indignation *, *That he bated all his Labour, which he had taken under the Sun, because he should leave it to the Man that should be after him; and who knoweth, whether he shall be a wise Man or a Fool* (intimating

* Eccles. xi. 18, 19.

perhaps

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perhaps the unpromising Genius of *Reboam*)? *Yet shall he have Rule over all my Labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewn myself wise under the Sun— This is also Vanity.*

The plain Truth is, if Children are good, the Providence of God, and their own Virtue and Industry, will make them happy— If they are bad, or disposed to be so, Riches will confirm them in their Vices, and supply the Calls of them—Many a virtuous and good Youth has been spoiled by a great Fortune, but never made unhappy by the want of one. So that this again confirms our Saviour's Advice, and recommends the Goodness and Wisdom of it, because Riches, both on account of acquiring and enjoying them, are Matters of such dangerous Temptation. The Moralist has more than once repeated it for our Observation, *That he that hasteth to be rich, shall not be innocent.* And *Tacitus*, I remember, the *Roman* Historian, of approved Judgment and uncommon Penetration, speaking of the native Poverty of the *German* People, who knew not the Use
of

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of Gold and Silver, says, *Argentum & Aurum, propitii, an irati dii negaverint, dubito.* He questions whether that sort of Ignorance was not rather owing to the Blessing, than the Displeasure of Providence. The Apostle St. Paul admonishes us *, *That they that will be rich, fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Perdition and Destruction: For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the Truth, and pierced themselves through with many Sorrows.*

And our Saviour has set the Matter in a very strong and affecting Light indeed, when he tells us †, *That it is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*—What can more emphatically express the dangerous Temptation, or be more importantly urged to awaken the Care and quicken the Diligence of the Rich, than to be told by our Saviour himself, who is the Judge and the great Disposer of Life and

* 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

† Matt. xix. 24.
Death,

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Death, that it is next to an Impossibility, that they should be saved?

Another Argument to the Discouragement of an avaricious Temper is, That Riches, to a Man already possessed of as much as is sufficient to the Necessities and reasonable Accommodations of Life, come in as troublesome Superfluities; for, to such an one, they bring nothing that I can think of, which he might not enjoy as well, and better without them in his present Station. It is justly observed by a great *French* Philosopher, “ That Riches are wrongfully called
 “ and accounted Goods; for they neither
 “ make any one good, nor reform the Wicked; but are common both to Good and
 “ Wicked; They will neither mend a
 “ Man’s Mind, nor reform his Vices, nor
 “ improve his Understanding”—If they make any Alteration there, it will probably be for the worse—It will probably be to dull and stupify his Understanding, to animate and excite his vicious Passions, and to spoil his Mind by Pride and Uncharitableness. They will not cure his Diseases, nor
 ease

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ease him of his Pains—They will rather multiply and aggravate them both, at least they will administer the Occasions of them in the Plenty and Luxury of his Table, if he has not the Virtue and Resolution to withstand the Temptation—One thing indeed they will do; though they cannot secure him against Sicknes, they will purchase for him a great deal of Ceremony and Attendance in it, so that he shall scarce be able to rest for the infinite Solitude of his numerous Friends, *i. e.* he will be sick with more Ceremony, but less Quiet and Tranquillity, than his meaner Neighbours.

His Riches will not lengthen his Days, nor add to the Chearfulness and Comfort of them—But, if he has not a good Guard upon himself, they will make them shorter than God designed them; and, for the Air and Chearfulness of an *innocent* and *fearless* Mind, they will give him the Disquiet, the Thoughtfulness, the Fear, the Danger, of a *guilty* one: They will not increase the Number of his Friends, or make him more beloved by his Relations, or more esteemed
by

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by other People—If he does not use them well, they will make him more feared than loved, more envied and hated than esteemed—They will enlarge his Flatterers, but contract the Number of his Friends; and, instead of an affectionate Correspondence, will create mutual Jealousies and Suspicions between himself and his Relations; so that, as the rich Man may manage it, with all imaginable Advantages for Happiness, he shall, as it were, stand alone upon the Earth, hated by, and hating all about him; without Esteem, without Friendship, without natural Affection. Riches have such a general Ascendant over Men, that one is liable to be suspected of Insincerity, and acting a Part to say any thing to discredit them; but, I think, I have spoken but the Truth of things, and that nothing has been said to Excess: For, I cannot see, that Riches of themselves, exclusive of a generous and religious Use of them for the Good of others, do advance our Happiness one Jot; for, if a moderate Fortune, with a contented Mind and a virtuous Life, will procure us necessary and comfortable Subsistence—If it
leaves

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leaves us Time and Opportunity to improve our Minds—If it puts us into the most likely Way to habituate ourselves to Temperance—to preserve Health, and lengthen Life—If it allows and supports us in modest and innocent Amusements, and sweetens our Enjoyments—If it renders us easy and chearful in our Conversation, creates us sincere Friends, loving and kind Relations, and makes us valued and esteemed by other People—I say, if all this is most usually and most naturally procured by a low Fortune, with a moderate and virtuous Mind, and Riches rather break in upon and disturb this Tranquillity, than establish and increase it, then is it a Precept exactly suited to the Wisdom, and Kindness, and compassionate Care of our Blessed Saviour for us, to enjoin us, *not to lay up for ourselves Treasures upon Earth*; for they are of themselves of so little Importance to the Happiness of particular People, that, when all Accounts are cast up, it will appear plainly upon the Balance, that there is no Good in them, but *for a Man to rejoice, and do Good in his Life.*

The

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The next thing I shall urge against a
 fordid Temper, and in Justification of our
 Saviour's Precept, is, that Riches, when we
 have got them, are not properly our own—
 They belong to the great Lord and Propri-
 etor of the Universe, and are entrusted in
 our Hands only for the Good of others—
 The Rich are the Stewards and Dispensers
 of God's Bounty; he expects an Account of
 the Distribution, and will severely punish
 the Neglect of it—So that, the very Consi-
 deration, upon which only Riches are desir-
 able to a Man of a modest and humble
 Mind, and who has a just Sense of his Frail-
 ty, is an Argument why he will not desire
 them. I know it is given, as a plausible
 Reason by the Covetous, when he is pressed
 upon the Point, that he only heaps up Riches
 to enlarge his Opportunities of doing Good--
 But, in the Mouth of the Covetous, this is
 a light and unseemly Answer to a Question
 of very serious Moment; for all the World
 discerns, and he himself is conscious, that
 he means nothing less—But, supposing his
 Intentions never so honest, yet, I say, it is
 more agreeable to the Modesty and Humi-
 lity

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lity of a Christian, not to be over-forward upon the Point, not to hasten to be rich, out of a vain Conceit of our own Virtue and Abilities to use Riches well, but rather to sit down contented, and wait the Issues of God's Providence; and, if he thinks fit to bless our Industry, and enlarge our Circumstances, it is then Time enough to adjust our Charity. I know this is a Matter that rich Men are not usually much concerned about; but, I am sure, if the Gospel tells us Truth, they have no small Affair upon their Hands, to make a good and Christian Use of their great Fortunes—Our Blessed Saviour intimates, that it was an happy thing to be rich; but then the Reason is (a very distasteful one to the Generality of Men) that it is more *blessed to give, than to receive*; the Charity of the Rich is their great Privilege and Advantage. And, agreeably to this, *St. Paul* gives a very solemn Charge to us *, *That those who are rich in this World, be sure to do Good, to be rich in good Works, glad to distribute, willing to communicate.* And *St. James* speaks very freely, but affectingly,

* 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

when

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when he observes the Unmercifulness of wealthy People * ; *Go to now, ye rich Men, weep and howl for your Miseries that shall come upon you; your Riches are corrupted, and your Garments moth-eaten, your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the Rust of them shall be a Witness against you.* And in the Account which our Saviour gives us of the Proceedings at the Day of Judgment, it seems as if Charity and Mercy would be the principal Points of Enquiry : And, for that Reason, because they are too often defective in their Duty, the Apostle *St. John* represents the great Men of the Earth, as more affectingly struck than others, with the Terrors of the last Day † ; *For the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, will hide themselves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains, and will say to the Mountains and Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him, that sitteth on the Throne.*

It is observed by *Strada*, giving the several Reasons of the Abdication and Retreat

* Jam. v. 1, 2, 3.

† Rev. v. 15, 16.

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of the great Emperor *Charles V*, that one of them was, that he might sit down and recollect himself, *Antequam ad Dei Tribunal attraheretur, tantæ humanæ felicitatis reus*; before he was summoned to the Tribunal of God, to answer for the wise and good Administration of such extraordinary Felicity, as was laid to his Account and Charge. Upon this Consideration, doubtless, there is a remarkable Mercy and Compassion in our Saviour's Advice; for no wise Man would desire to enhance his Account at that awful Day, but to have it as clear, and short, and honest, as is possible. It is a prodigious Duty that is incumbent on the Rich, as Stewards and Dispensers of God's Bounty; for all that they squander in Vice, and Pride, and Licentiousness, is not so much thrown away, but *treasured up against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of God's righteous Judgment*. And what Shame, and Confusion, and Terror, must surprize the Sordid and Unmerciful, the Careless and Luxurious, when they shall be summoned to the Bar of Judgment, and Enquiry made into the Use and Administration of their Treasures,

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tures, how much Good they have done by their Charity, and what Part of their Wealth they have distributed in promoting the Glory of God, and the Good of Men; in feeding the Hungry, clothing the Naked, visiting the Sick, releasing the Prisoner, and doing such Offices of Tenderness and Humanity, as were due to their Fellow-Creatures!

As little as most of us are disposed to think so, it is however a most certain Truth, that to be rich is a very nice and perilous Trial of our Virtue; and he, who has the Sincerity and Modesty of a Christian, will not only be contented, but even thankful to God for a safer and more humble Station—Or, if it has pleased God to bless your honest and well-governed Industry with Success, you will esteem it a Circumstance of great Happiness to you, that you live in a Place, where so many Opportunities present themselves of doing Good; and that, by the wise and charitable Oeconomy of this rich and populous City, Matters are so prudently conducted, that the Opportunities of gaining Riches are not more in Number, or

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more obvious to Practice, than those of employing them charitably and religiously. We are apt, out of a national Self-love, to pride ourselves upon the Extent of our Trade, and the prodigious Riches of our Capital—It is, perhaps, a pardonable Vanity, and something may be said to excuse it; but that which would truly distinguish us, and give us a Praise and a Name to all Posterity, would be, that we were not more to be observed for accumulating Riches, than for employing them usefully and wisely: And it were certainly one of the best Marks we could shew of our being sensible of Gratitude to God, of our Obligations to Christianity, of Humanity and Tenderness to our Fellow-Creatures, if, upon every Occasion of public Charity, we prevented the Petitioners, and acted with such a ready and disinterested Generosity, that we might seem to have our Saviour's Precept engraven upon our Hearts, *That it is more blessed to give, than to receive.* In Confidence of your good Dispositions, therefore, of your Gratitude to God Almighty (the great Friend and Benefactor to us all), of your Sense of the Obligations

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gations of your Religion (which, in the Design and Spirit of it, is Love and Good-nature), I stand here your Petitioner for something in Assistance to this great and good Design,

The Providence of God has made these poor Sufferers dependent upon you for their Support, and Cure, and Consolation; and, rightly judged, it is not more an Happiness to *them*, that they have such a certain and generous Fund of Subsistence, than it is to *you*, that, by the Blessing of God, you are made the Managers and Distributers of it—Your kind Attendance on this Work of Love shews your Sensibility of this, and in some sort, renders our Arguments to Charity superfluous—Were there more Occasion to press them than there is, I should be more confident of Success in my Application to you, because I am sure you observe, and observe too with a proper Resentment, that, however it may fare with Charity, there never was greater Encouragement given to Luxury and Vice---I need not enter into Particulars of this Kind---The

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World sees too much of them; and therefore it is the proper Character of the virtuous and generous Man of Quality, and of the frugal and sober Man of Business, to keep up a better Spirit in our Country, and to shew the observing World, by their Example, that Riches are given us by Providence for other and more important Purposes, than Vanity and Sensuality. It is not my Meaning, by disparaging Riches, to raise Charity upon the Ruin of Industry: That were absurd; the State of the World will not bear it: Besides, Industry is the best Friend to Charity---Nor, when we are Masters of Wealth, does Reason or Christianity forbid the Use of it, or debar the Rich of every innocent, comfortable, or distinguished Accommodation of Life---Wealth is one of the Blessings of God, in the Language of God's Holy Spirit; but then it must never be forgotten by the Wealthy, that the best Enjoyment, the most *Epicurean* Use of Riches (I speak the Sentiments of every humane and generous Heart), is to do the greatest and most extensive Good with them. Upon which Consideration the Charity

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rity here before you claims your particular
 Attention---You know the Nature; you see
 the Conduct of it; and, as you have a quick
 Sensibility of the Sufferings of the Unfor-
 tunate, I may say in the strictest Sense, that,
 by seeing them relieved, you have felt the
 Good of it by Experience; and I should
 wrong you grievously to suspect, that your
 Munificence can be wanting to it in any
 Degree, when you are told, by most authen-
 tic Accounts, *That since the 3d of Novem-*
ber, 1740, it has pleased God to bless the De-
*sign with such Success, that above * Twenty*
thousand distressed Objects have been relieved
by the London Infirmary; and that, from
labouring under the Oppression of some of the
most malignant Diseases, and unhappy Acci-
dents, they have been reinstated in their honest
and industrious Capacities of working, whereby
the Public again enjoy the Benefit of their
Labour, and they and their poor Families are
preserved from perishing, and prevented from
being a constant Encumbrance to the Commu-

* See the Account printed at the End of the Lord
 Bishop of Landaff's Sermon, and the Accounts of
 the following Years.

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nity---If this be the Case, look round about you, and either support this noble Plan of Charity with a Bounty becoming your Wealth and illustrious Distinction, or find out another, if you can, that more deserves your pious Regard and Encouragement.

And thus much has been said to recommend to our Practice the first Part of our Saviour's Instruction, *Lay not up, &c.* And you see, upon the whole, with what excellent Wisdom, and condescending Kindness, our Blessed Saviour suits his Precepts to our real Happiness--He might, if he had pleased, have flattered our Weakness, and adapted his Instructions to our Passions, and to the Guise of the World---I said, he might have done so--I recal that Word---He *could* not--It was inconsistent with his Nature and his Character---He was Truth and Goodness, and therefore could utter nothing but what was so; nothing but what tended to inform our Minds, to rectify our Manners, and promote our Happiness---And the Instruction in the Text, if rightly considered, is a great Instance of it; for, however

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ever it may seem to those who will not, or cannot discern its Beauty, there is nothing in it extravagant and impracticable, nothing severe and morose, nothing vain and affected, but it is the Voice of the best Philosopher, the best Friend, the best and most faithful Counsellor to Men, which bids them, *not to lay up for themselves Treasures upon Earth; but to lay up for themselves Treasures in Heaven.* For certainly, if there be a God; if Christianity be true; if Men have immortal Souls, and Religion is a serious thing; the first and principal Enquiry to every wise Man will be, how to secure an Interest in Heaven.

There is no Comparison, upon the Balance, between the Treasures of the Earth, and the Treasures of Heaven, because all those Circumstances which attend the one, and demonstrate their Vanity and Imperfection, do serve to recommend and illustrate the Excellency of the other—For, it is the Excellency of the heavenly Treasure, the Felicity of another Life, that it will affect and dwell in the Mind, the most valuable
and

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and noble Part of us, and which is properly the Seat of real Joy and substantial Happiness—That it will be durable and certain, an Inheritance incorruptible, upon which Time itself will make no Impression, *neither Moth nor Rust will corrupt it, nor will Thieves break through and steal.* * *When I see you again,* says our Blessed Saviour to his Disciples, *your Hearts will rejoice, and your Joy no Man taketh from you*—It is the Excellency of the heavenly Treasure, that it is acquired by Innocence and Virtue, and enjoyed with pure and unmixed Delight—That there is nothing in it that is niggardly and selfish, but every thing perfectly charitable, and kind, and communicative.—That it is so far from injuring the Possessor, as Riches often do, that it is an Happiness constant and uninterrupted, with this Circumstance of Perfection in it, that it is increased and doubled to him, by being communicated to others. It is the Excellency of the Treasure that is above, that it puts us out of all Danger and Temptation, for it is Reward and final Judgment. It is the Excel-

John xvi. 22.

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lency of it, that it consists in virtuous Improvement, growing Perfection—That it wipes away all Tears from our Eyes; for *, *in the Tabernacle of God, there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain*, but pure Love, Fulness of Joy, immortal Pleasure, heavenly Conversation!

This is the exalted Strain of Scripture Language in its Descriptions of Heaven, when it would awaken our Diligence, and engage our Affections in the Pursuit of it—And no Man, one would think, that could set and compare these things together, would quit his Pretensions to such an invaluable Purchase, for things so uncertain, so imperfect, so low and mean, so useless to the purposes of Happiness, so unsatisfying, so dangerous and ensnaring, so full of Envy and Mischief to the Possessors of them, as the Treasures of the Earth!

Rev. xxi. 4,

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